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Making Planning Public

On the pursuit of good urbanism and the troubled search for a common world

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Julio Paulos

"Who is a citizen? What are his rights and duties? Where does the private end? Where does the public begin?"

— Isabelle Stengers, 2000

"The democratic city must offer more than universals, which in any case are not necessarily urban in character."

— Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift, 2005

Zusammenfassung

Wie funktioniert Stadtplanung in einem politischen Zeitalter, in dem Dialogfähigkeit eine Tugend und eine Notwendigkeit zugleich ist? Die Stadtplanung, die als institutionalisierte Technokratie zielorientierte Effektivität anstrebt und doch schwer fassbar ist, wurde zum Gegenstand ständiger öffentlicher Anfechtungen und obliegt einer immer häufigeren politischen Rechenschaftspflicht. Mit der unablässigen Forderung nach mehr städtischer Demokratie verschieben sich die Schwerpunkte und Wertvorstellungen der Stadtplanung hin zu mehr Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, Partizipation und Transparenz.

In der vorliegenden Dissertation wird ein pragmatischer, von der Akteur-Netzwerk-Theorie inspirierter Forschungsansatz verwendet, um die zum Teil widersprüchlichen Auswirkungen des planerischen Strebens nach urbaner Lebensqualität im Zusammenspiel mit den öffentlichen Maßnahmen zu untersuchen. Unter dem Einfluss einer sich neu definierenden Norm, veränderten Werten und zunehmender Bürger:innenbeteiligung wird Stadtplanung als ein Ensemble von Situationen und Ereignissen beleuchtet, welche durch das Aufgreifen aktueller Fragen die Öffentlichkeit erreichen. Durch die Gegenüberstellung von drei verschiedenen Stadtverwaltungen –Lissabon, Wien und Zürich– und deren politischen Hintergründe, analysiert die Dissertation empirisch die Entstehung städtischer Herausforderungen als kollektives Anliegen angesichts der verschiedenen Formen öffentlichen Handelns in der Stadtplanung. Mit anderen Worten, es werden Beispiele der Stadtplanung in einer Vielzahl von Erscheinungsformen und Konfigurationen untersucht, indem analysiert wird, wie das Vorhandensein verschiedenster Weltanschauungen zu einer gemeinsamen Expertise hybridisiert wird. Zu diesem Zweck wird die Stadtplanung nicht als eine feste Modalität betrachtet, die zu *téchne* oder *démos* gehört, oder periodisch definiert wird; sondern als öffentliche Angelegenheit und Gemeingut, wobei hinterfragt wird, wie „gutes“ städtisches Leben an der Schnittstelle von Politik, Wissenschaft und Ethik problematisiert wird.

Abstract

How does city planning work in a political age where being dialogic constitutes a virtue and imperative at once? Known as institutionalised technocracy and bounded polity, city planning has come to be the object of continuous acts of public contestation, and the subject of an increasing prevalence of political accountability. With a relentless demand for increased urban democracy, the conduits and implications of city planning are reassembled into novel layers of visibility, worth, and discernibility.

The present dissertation endorses a pragmatist-inspired ANT-lens to examine the adverse itineraries of planning's pursuit to achieve good city life, and what sustains its current co-constitutions *as* public action. Subject to normative shifts, value variations and civic engagements, city planning is investigated as an ensemble of situations and events that involves the particular urgent attribution of problems to publics. By juxtaposing political backgrounds from three diverse city administrations —Lisbon, Vienna, and Zurich— the dissertation empirically inquires the emergence of urban issues as collective concerns, in the face of planning's various modes of public action. In other words, samples of city planning across a variety of expressions and configurations are examined, by analysing how the presence of many truths are framed, counter-framed and hybridised into shared expertise. Towards this end, city planning is studied not as a fixed modality belonging to *téchne* or *démos*, or as periodic abyss, but as public matter and common good, questioning how good urban living is problematised at the intersection of politics, science and ethics.

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List of abbreviations

ANT	Actor-Network Theory
AfS	Amt für Städtebau
APA	American Planning Association
AzW	Architekturzentrum Wien
BZO	Bau- und Zonenordnung
CIUL	Centre de Informação Urbana de Lisboa
GP	Gestaltungsplan
IG	Interessengemeinschaft
KR	Kommunaler Richtplan
Mahü	Mariahilferstrasse
OIE	Operação Integrada Entrecampos
OPP	Obligatory Passage Point
RPG	Raumplanungsgesetz
STEP	Stadtentwicklungsplan
STS	Science and Technology Studies
SIA	Schweizer Ingenieur- und Architekturverein
TU	Technische Universität
UPCB	Uma praça em cada bairro

CHAPTER 1.

TECHNOCRACY OVERFLOWED

1.1Introduction: The pursuit of good city life

> *Beyond 2020 – Building Human Smart Cities was an international summit co-organised by four consultancy firms taking place in June 2015. Over three days consultants, innovators, politicians, advisors, managers and academics gathered at Lisbon's hub for technology (Lispólis) to discuss issues of 'digital social innovation' and reflect on the future of cities. Benefitting from the support of Lisbon's municipality, the summit not only offered nine panels, several network meetings and the first edition of Vodafone's BIG Smart cities entrepreneurship competition, it also constituted a display on the significance of corporate conventions. Marked by exaggerated, sometimes idle, yet stereotyped statements, the summit offered a fertile ground for corporate rhetorics to unfold marathon speeches and stereotypical behaviour was one aspect of the convention, the other was streamlined action. With information content of the speeches not being of central importance, the performative aspect seemed to dominate. Words, acts and images were ordered in characteristic fashion. High-end diagrams and visual supports were key to increase attention. The following sequence was expressed in varying degrees: technological innovation ensures sustainable development which equals quality of life, ergo this is what constitutes an intelligent solution for the good city, the city of tomorrow. Within this setting, transparency was regarded as the highest moral standard and the participation of publics as the only means to achieve human-centred solutions and political legitimacy. As a result, 'dialogic' governments were considered to be the ultimate political framework for good urban living.*

"The city has triumphed" (Glaeser 2011)[1]. Around the world, we are currently witnessing how a range of institutions, actors and projects are paying attention to Ed Glaeser's narrative. If cities are to be considered amongst the greatest invention of humankind, it is striking how 'the urban' plays a crucial role in 'changing' and 'saving' the world. Concentrating markets, cultures and people, it seems as if 'the City' (here with capital C) is not only a reflection of values, but also a gateway for optimistic ideas re-connecting inhabitants to high productivity, intelligence and prosperity – in short, good urban life. The above excerpt from my fieldnotes echoes the strength of holistic ideals not only framing 'the City' as a success story but also as a variety of socio-technical enchantments where the public interest receives a privileged role. In the same breath it illustrates how a certain kind of urban scientism, positivism and elitism

[1] Creative city advocates such as Ed Glaeser (see also Richard Florida or Charles Landry) are often ridiculed by academics for being optimistic. I join Richard Walker here and his assertion that they are anything but naïve and that it is interesting to see how these discourses join forces with other thought currents like for instance urban resilience theorists (Florida 2003; Landry 2012).

"call publics into being" (Dewey 1927), thus shaping, infiltrating, exposing, outsourcing and multiplying public action.

Figure 1. Picture taken at the Beyond 2020––Building Human Smart Cities' summit at Lispólis (Lisbon, 2015 © J. Paulos)

During the summit, city planning problems were suggestive and evocative in a number of ways. In this particular situation, city planning impinges more closely on connecting politics, publics, technology and expertise into an ethos of collective experience, not only signalling political or technical authority but also drawing attention to what constitutes democracy. Proximity, diversity, mobility, and accessibility were presented as being much more than technical concepts. They were values pronounced on behalf of a public and, more importantly, framed as a result of collective decision-making. I remember this episode of my fieldwork plainly. It was 2015, in late June and I was entering my second month of fieldwork in Lisbon, Portugal. It was not my first encounter with the heterogenous world of planning; I had undertaken a research stay at Vienna's municipal planning office about half a year earlier, for nearly three months. In particular, I was struck by the many problems that planning ought to be a means to solve and left with the impression that there seemed to be a general consensus regarding cities as collective projects in non-authoritative ways through the articulation of democratic, human– and citizen-centred idioms.

Accordingly, the city of the 21st century is suitably qualified to combine both government mechanisms, which are now shaped by new arrangements and public interests, supplemented by polymorphous problems and events. This intersection is most aptly articulated with the question: which publics do those interests or values serve? From *A*msterdam to *Z*urich, city municipalities not only embellish public places they prioritise practicality and propose the moral dimensions of 'good urban life'; or, to paraphrase this into a question, how do our western societies now aspire to an overruling rationale and imperative that ensures a prosperous and desirable urban experience beyond the standards of modernity such as growth, progress and capital. The pursuit of good urban life is a rearticulated achievement and reformulation of governmental expertise (see also Osborne and Rose 1999); collective life and technical know-how are related to, and democratised into, particular conceptions of urban goods, services and experiences taking shape in various ensembles of expertise, public interest and collective choice-making.

Good urban life then refers to the progressive yet 'harmonised states' (Barry 2001:62) in municipal urban planning that I have encountered throughout my research journey. In more academic terms, good urbanism could be identified as an 'overflowing of the common' urbanism, which can be assumed to be mainly preoccupied with the problems that the 'common good' poses and the potential benefits that a new kind of urbanism promises. This novel articulation of urbanism as good, which relies on the constant redefinition of public purposes with the contemporary city being thought of as an *ethos*, gives shape and space to novel kinds of collectives. Nowadays to plan cities is to think in terms other than buildings, infrastructures or services (Schnitzler 2016).

This pursuit of good city life is driven by some peculiar form of justice and particular grammar of citizenship. One that establishes a moral economy connecting the political imagination of the Enlightenment with the Greek metaphor of the *Polis*[2]. Contrary to existing scholarship, justice is not only a glorification of the city as the peak of human civilisation, with most of the knowledge-production being allocated or extracted to corporate-led placemaking prophets, but it is reshaped by what von Schnitzler has named 'multiple publics'. Raco and Savini (2019) have, for instance, indicated how the relationship between technocratic planning and expert

[2] I adhere here to the 'language of politics' as used by Despret, Haraway, Latour and Stengers which they see related to 'polis' and 'polite': or, as 'good manners' (politesse), response to and with (see Haraway 2008:92).

knowledge has changed. Instead of calculation, presentation and visualisation, nowadays, urban truths are increasingly generated as a 'matter of consideration'[3], deployed through combined approaches, goals and rationalities in different moments of the policy process. More importantly, technical expertise today is also reshaped by how 'the public' is imagined and thus co-constituted. Once a homogenised and passive entity, publics are *considered* and taken into account in governmental action.

This dissertation then deals with the democratisation of planning expertise as a co-constitutive, reflective and agential mode of public action by dislocating the expert/non-expert divide, and by asking *how*, in a political age where shared ideals dominate our sense of the common world, (1) new situations and events of urban technocratic expertise shape public action and (2) constitute the common good.

1.2 There's always someone more expert

The observation that planning is preoccupied with the achievement of certain values and ends in the name of the common good is hardly new (Alexander 2002; Meyerson and Banfield 1964; Moroni 2004). Over the last two decades debates in planning and urban theory took excessive interest in addressing and re-formulating ethical theories concerning appropriate[4] urban development (Marcuse 2009). A central figure in this respect is Susan S Fainstein who developed a normative framework promoting 'the just city' (Fainstein 2010). In doing so, Fainstein investigates present urban institutions and policies, especially as they perform projects and programmes of urban development. Building on her investigations across different city-regions, Fainstein examines how the governing norm of neoliberalism could be replaced by justice as criterion. As correctly stated by Lake, situating justice as the subject of planning views 'planning as the practice of justice rather than the justice of planning practice' (Lake 2016:1207). With demands for democratic processes on the rise, justice should become a value influencing all public decisions without turning into a theory of the 'good city' (ibid.:5). The understanding that institutional change might be explained by the reorganisation of collective

[3] In line with John Dewey's reasoning, that is, a consideration does not merely mean an existence, but an existence that has a certain claim upon the judgement to be formed' (Dewey 1915:516)

[4] Marcuse to whom I make reference here speaks of 'commons planning' (cf. *Chapter 2*)

actions around urban and spatial visions of democracy, equity and diversity is particularly informative.

The recently renewed attention towards public action is characterised by a strong analytical focus in institutional planning thought (Gualini 2018; Salet 2018a, 2018b). Drawing on theoretical insights from philosophical pragmatism and historical institutionalism, planning theorists are not only concerned with institutional change *per se*, but acknowledge the path-dependencies between norms, aspirations and patterns of social interaction in particular contexts. While such works develop a pertinent analysis of the de-composition of planning institutions through a 'plurality of social subjects' (Salet 2018b), they remain largely vague on how public action *hybridises* and re-composes city planning as a public matter. So far, the democratisation of public institutions is a widely acknowledged phenomenon as in the emergence of participatory governance (Innes and Booher 2000; Pløger 2001; Sager 2002). In this regard, planning proceedings have commonly been studied as part of political processes in urban democratic governance, whereby the analytical discussion mostly revolves around epistemic or political argumentations regarding the legitimacy of participatory frameworks and patterns (see also Metzger, Soneryd, and Linke 2017). Planning scholars Leino and Laine (2012:100) have therefore urged more attention should be payed to issue-formation in planning processes:

> *«When approaching the question whether a particular process counts as democratic or not, and placing the trajectory of the issue as the key question, the results indicate that if a strong matter of concern builds up, it will run the process like an oscillator, where two or possibly more forces keep the issue moving and at the same time measure the limits and possibilities of democratic dialogue in a particular place and time».*
>
> *—Helena Leino and Markus Laine 2012*

One contribution this dissertation aims to make is to prove how a fracture of Actor-Network Theory's (ANT) intellectual project inspired by philosophical pragmatism may contribute to further expand the problem Leino and Laine have sketched above, that is, to question how public concerns and considerations undergo a formative process that enables a particular coming into being of administrating and problematising cities. In her famous book, *Collaborative Planning*, Patsy Healey (1997) suggests that governance systems need to change their parameters of thinking if public interests are to be effectively integrated in the role of planning politics.

> *«…if a participatory political culture is to develop, and reclaim the public realm, then the machinery of government must be surrounded by requirements which encourage inclusionary responsiveness to the*

> *diverse ways of living, ways of doing business and systems of meaning of the relevant political communities.»*
>
> *—Patsy Healey 1997*

A similar argument, although less programmatic, is made by Savini (2019) who understands the novelty of planning practices as embedded in operational, collective and constitutional norms. The observation made by Savini today resonates with Healey's argument, that is, in a world that is rapidly democratising, normative statements not only alter with the specification of public requirements, but they also co-produce norms and meanings that lead to complex institutional change (Gunder and Hillier 2007; Hillier 2015a). In no way, I would disagree with those assertions which challenge the institutional and normative logics of the planning professions. However, I think of disruptions such as societal fragmentation, networked innovation or post-crisis austerity in a much more situated sense; as a moment where problematic situations are opened up or closed down and what holds them together (Deleuze and Guattari 1983; Latour 1987). To be fair, institutional planning scholarship often discusses transformative orders and reflects upon the complex conditions of change through an analysis of spatial planning as fields of practice or regimes of governance (Albrechts, Balducci, and Hillier 2016; Davoudi 2015; Healey 2012). From this standpoint, planning expertise is often analysed as a reflective sign of 'argumentative and deliberative processes'. This observation by Raco and Savini (2019)[5] is particularly telling as it shows how the question of knowledge in planning (theory) is still largely treated and perceived as a modernist governmental technique being instrumentalised, politicised or formalised through the democratisation of urban policy-making. What if, instead of asking how technocratic planning gets contained at the institutional level to serve or reflect public purposes, interests and rationales, we rather inquire *how matters of concern recompose and problematise planning as public action*? In other words, how do concrete situations, settings and events turn planning into an operator enabling city administrations to govern effectively while responding to uncertainties and reformulating public values according to what is presumed good (or bad).

[5] Raco and Savini speak of technocratic expertise as 'context-specific' (p. 6) and 'discontinuous' (p. 5). Little is said though about the active, persistent and non-human modes of ordering knowledge-claims as in relation to urban phenomena and how claims of objectivity draw upon a number of public effects, which in turn, produce their own publics and values in urban environments.

1.3 City planning as a diffracted problem of a technical democracy

One way to enter this discussion is with the notion of technical democracy as introduced by Michel Callon and colleagues (Callon, Lascoumes, and Barthe 2009). The authors argue how particular processes and possibilities of technology, science and innovation overflow[6], reframe and are rearticulated by existing frameworks of politics, governance, and also knowledge at large. Is planning a technical or political issue? Or, maybe an ethical one? The important point advanced by the authors is that this is far from being a theoretical question or speculative matter, since our established categories such as expertise, policy, science or democracy disintegrate, or hybridise, to use the actual word. Not only has this consequences for the traditional forms of governance, it actually shapes how institutions seek to govern across entities and areas. A similar observation was already made by Latour and consorts a few decades ago; it could be loosely summed up by the famous and memorable ANT-slogan *science is politics by other means* (Latour 1993). Callon and colleagues' contribution, however, diverges slightly from the initial early-ANT project as it calls out the multiplication of entities, not only illustrating how new advancements in science or technology might impact the role of democratic politics but to question how hybridisation actually enables new conceptions, modes or exercises –of let's say, for example, the public interest– to emerge. Through this lens it becomes possible to go beyond an institutionalist analysis of city planning; instead of asking how institutional responsibility shifts through political, economic or cultural challenges, we may start asking how the common good is practically achieved, captured and networked in city planning practices.

As already hinted at above, Callon and colleagues' notion is part of a wider intellectual tradition. Throughout this dissertation, I will draw on various moments, thoughts, vocabularies and insights from the intellectual practice widely known as Actor-Network Theory (in short, ANT), without celebrating it as dogma. Rather, I understand ANT as a 'companion' (Farías, Blok, and Roberts 2019); an open-ended toolkit and sensibility with which to explore 'enduring tensions' (Law and Singleton 2013; Mol 2010). ANT accounts dealing with questions of democracy go back to the early 2000s and capitalise on the practice's most characteristic

[6] More than a metaphor or descriptor, overflow is a concept used to understand how an excess or surplus of what can't be accommodated in its initial residue spills over and thus leads to a reframing of situations or events. For Callon, on whom I draw here, overflows only exist when framing happens, which means defining; and defining allows for boundaries to determine and impose a frame (Callon 1998a).

feature urging us to focus on non-humans or objects that co-constitute practices, forms and processes in, of and through a procedural democracy (Callon, Lascoumes, and Barthe 2001; Latour 2004a). From its origins, ANT's interest in the political question is covered by a research agenda preoccupied with mundane practices in seemingly *a*political settings: science and laboratories (Latour and Woolgar 1986), medicine and hospitals (Mol 2003), engineering and infrastructures (Law 2002), economy and markets (Callon 1998b) or law and councils (Latour 2013). In these accounts, the political question emerges essentially in two ways as in **(1)** *'who acts'* and as in **(2)** how are *'good manners'* achieved. The second point in particular is often underestimated, although ANT scholars constantly undermine the importance of describing how truths are governed and need to coincide with the good. Or, in Mol's own words what "[*t]he good life* might entail is not recognized as an essentially contested and thus a political issue." (Mol 2010:174)

If we stay with this reasoning for a bit, it becomes obvious that the political question cannot be asked in absolute terms; one that transcends everything to offer a universal moral law of the common good. Technical democratisation, as pointed out by recent ANT-scholarship varies in shape and form, which means that the search for the common good is always situated and contested; Farías and Blok (2016b) invite urban researchers to understand processes of democratisation as fragile and henceforth to direct their attention towards more 'specific disruptive events' (ibid.:546). Accordingly, authority no longer resides in the modern institutions of representative democracy. Even if planning remains deeply entangled in the 'modernist fabric' (Balducci et al. 2011:489), technocratic expertise is not only distributed across divides between society/nature, humans/non-humans, expertise/laypeople or active/passive, but also delegated and designed to meet values according to which governmental action is assessed as either good or bad. In other words, science and technology not only overflow governments, but governments re-enact concerns and reframe the political question through 'possible states of the world' (Callon et al. 2009:120). Something prominently described by Callon et al as situations of 'radical uncertainty' (2009:21-22) and discussed by Latour as the purification of techno-scientific issues in society.

This is where the dissertation aims to expand existing research on the democratisation of planning practices in at least two ways. As mentioned above, it first considers the shifts in technocratic expertise not only as a phenomenon of an emerging deliberative governance that coalesces in popular processes of participatory policy-making, but it foregrounds how knowledge-claims are performed widely. Second, apart from questioning the democratisation

of planning in the context of city administrations' *"coming out"*, this dissertation attempts to reconnect planning's political question with recent planning scholarship by asking how various publics come to matter. Put differently, how is the pursuit of good urban life experimented and validated through collective articulations of city planning?

For the past decade, ANT has moved up in the ranks of planning theory (Boelens 2010; Rydin 2010; Rydin and Tate 2016). The use of ANT in planning theory is also known as the 'material turn' (Rydin 2014). The (re-)emergence of materiality in planning research deserves special attention because it was, for long, either neglected or perceived as too mundane (Beauregard 2012, 2015; Lieto 2017). The thesis at hand will empirically examine how objects and classifications interfere in planning practices. However, it will differ from such established scholarship by asking how planning is a world- and sense-making activity (Farías and Blok 2016a). To understand these types of ontological questions, Deweyan-inspired ANT scholars have engaged in empirical pragmatism so as to analyse how the issue- and value-formation of public action is entangled within emergent and contingent governance arrangements (Latour 2005a; Marres 2007; Marres and Lezaun 2011). John Dewey[7] is an important figure prefiguring ANT, for he has inspired a great deal of rethinking the technical and political dimension of valuation and its relation with democracy (Hutter and Stark 2015; Kjellberg and Mallard 2013; Kornberger et al. 2015); Dewey's understanding of the public being an emergent category spurred by experimentation, considerations and contestations of different political propositions.

Related to the two previous points, it is important to draw attention to the many voices and attempts to reflect and evaluate public interests in planning processes. Technical democratisation in urban settings is a rather multi-layered phenomenon. Beyond the scope of technical know-how and the institutional reorganisation of public policies, planning reconnects with many incalculable and reflective dimensions of urban citizenship. Today, managerialism, entrepreneurialism and digitisation are commonly used descriptors not only to explain newness in governance, but also the demise of public policy and complexity of public services (Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Roo, Hillier, and Wezemael 2012). In addition, the introduction of

[7] The parallel with ANT is all but distant since pragmatist theorists William James, Walter Lippmann, C.S. Peirce or Alfred N Whitehead have substantially shaped and prefigured ANT's intellectual project (Meyer 2015). One reason why this gets often omitted is because ANT draws inspiration from a range of other intellectuals: Michel Serres, Gabriel Tarde, Algirda J. Greimas (Blok and Jensen 2011). Just a note, Whitehead is not a pragmatist *per se*, although he has been put in conversation with them (Henning, Myers, and John 2015)

deliberative models in governance has not only reconfigured city administrations and expert claims but also reshaped the role of urban audiences. The question of how democratisation raises public issues is especially relevant with regards to the seemingly vanishing divide between expertise and non-expertise (see also Tironi 2015; Tironi and Valderrama 2018). While various interfaces have emerged in the last decade aiming at building bridges across entities, the very classifications, tribunes and modes of interaction between actors or issues remain highly experimental/uncertain in practice and dualistic in theory (see also Karvonen and van Heur 2014). In consequence, city formation and urban novelty are nowadays meant to raise public attention and spark public engagement. The role of planning becomes increasingly *diffracted*[8]; torn between political imaginaries and public expectations, new patterns of interference emerge where planning problematises urban phenomena. Awards, summits, rankings, panels are such settings (situations and events) where technocrats, politicians and citizens not only pursue various urban claim-making strategies, but also co-constitute public action around matters of shared uncertainty.

1.4 Devising an empiricist engagement towards planning practices

To make my argument and contribution clearer, it is paramount to understand how the interpretations of the pragmatist tradition[9] vary in both fields, planning theory and ANT. Planning scholarship's use of pragmatism has culminated in a 'practical' pragmatism (Healey 2009). In the 1970s US, pragmatist ideas had a conceptual and critical revival in the analysis of public administration, planning and policy. While Hoch (1984) claimed that the mainstream American planning theories of that time had 'strong family resemblances to a common theory of pragmatic action', one of the most emblematic critical planning theorists John Forester developed a theoretical approach to the study of planning which he labelled 'critical pragmatism' (Forester 1993). Today, pragmatist ideas are undergoing a revival in institutionalist planning scholarship who seeks to combine theories of pragmatism with those

[8] Barad's notion of diffraction is particularly relevant to illustrate this as it explains the constitution of knowledge beyond the idea of reflexivity or responsiveness (Barad 2007).

[9] Pragmatism is a philosophical movement that originated in the US in the late 19th Century and claims meanings are to be found in practical consequences; the way we understand the world is then inseparable from the agency within it. Pragmatism has significantly influenced non-philosophical disciplines ranging from psychology to law. Important for the present dissertation is its uptake in planning theory and ANT with the latter differentiating its use from sociological pragmatism. Hence I will refer to it as *pragmat-ist* and not pragmat-*ic* as proposed by Antoine Hennion (2016).

of institutionalism (Balducci 2018; Hoch 2017; Salet 2018b; Verma 2016). My position in relation to these recent theoretical streams is not absolute but strongly resonates with Charles Hoch's main argument in his now historical article *Doing Good and Being Right* (Hoch 1984). When Hoch criticises the overemphasis and pragmatist limitations of instrumental problem-solving, I join him by stressing the point that the analysis of 'purposive and consequential relationships' do not suffice when inquiring into the patterning of public norms because, as Hoch already put it back then, it is important to look at:

> *«[…] how the uncertainties generated by the control of corporate and government bureaucracies became recognized as problems by people subjected to such insecurity, as well as how those people learn to collaborate in overcoming this uncertainty.»*
>
> *-- Charles Hoch 1984*

Planning theorists' renewed interest in pragmatism falls short of engaging consequently with one of the key concepts of pragmatism, namely problematization. Not that Salet and colleagues do not recognize the importance of problems in shaping planning's patterns of public action, which are considered paramount in contemporary institutional change. However, the urban political question presented in this scholarship concedes a strong epistemological flavor which appears at odds with the ontological drift in ANT's re-enactment of Dewey's problematic inquiry (Marres 2019)[10]. Let me rephrase this: in drawing attention to purposive relationships, institutional planning-thought engages with pragmatism under the banner of yet another model of theory. In contrast, an empiricist engagement rather entails that we start thinking problematically about planning practices, so as to unpack many articulations of the political question of the urban demos and public action as asymmetric path-dependencies in situated encounters.

While the difference might not appear significant, it is still important and relevant because it marks an essential move not only highlighting the diffractions of planning in accordance with urban phenomena, but in stressing that urban issues need to be understood beyond their institutional capacity as how they make sense of the world. ANT's pragmatist empiricism towards the study of problematization appears particularly apt to tackle this for three reasons

[10] It should be noted that the influences of pragmatist principles on ANT vary in degree and in the kind of analytical interpretation that is exerted; yet more generally speaking, ANT's interest in classic pragmatist thought is driven by the radical empiricism that pragmatists, especially William James commend to study realities in the process of making (Latour 2007a). More recently and explicitly, Marres draws also on Dewey and Lippman to establish the significance of issue-based approaches to study the formation of publics (Marres 2005a). On pragmatist thinking and ANT, geographer Gary Bridge has also made important contributions (Bridge 2005, 2021)

that I will only briefly sketch here because they form essential parts of *Chapter 2*, *3* and *4*. First, ANT's pragmatist empiricism to problematization calls for situated inquiry as a mode of investigation. Second, it stresses that an empiricist engagement with practices allows for an ontological re-description of how problems and uncertainties stabilize into mechanisms, situations, inventions, ecologies and events. Third, it highlights how problematization constitutes heterogeneous and/or durable relations of different capacities with the presence or absence of external worlds.

1.5 Tales of three city municipalities becoming dialogic

What is new about city planning today that has not already been investigated? The study of the democratisation of technocratic expertise is one point. To devise an empiricist engagement is another point. But what to make of the specificity and expressivity of planning in a political age of shared uncertainties? Since the 1960s and reformist political activity, planning theorists have been discussing the functional specialisation of planning as public policy and how state and local governments were taken by 'civic boosters'. Consequence: an unclear common purpose (Beauregard 1990). With political reforms, planning was being specialised along various functions with practitioners being charged with a growing set of programmatic interventions. Imbued with political and moral purposes, state planning lost its substantive dimensions and unified gaze. If the functional disintegration of planning started in the 1960s and was already the state of the art in the 1990s, why then study planning today? What has happened to the figure of the bureaucratic planner in the last two decades worth commanding sufficient attention to it in current circumstances?

The answer lies in the question itself. Nowadays, city administrations are overwhelmed with handling the unknown. Triggered by an overflow of choices, city governments now aim at reducing the unknown by inducing newness through good experiences and dialogue at all costs. Modern categories such as progress or growth have been contested or complemented by dialogue, choices and opportunities; such as globalisation in the 1990s, or innovation, digitisation and transparency in the last two decades. As indicated above, 'choice opportunities' are not new; freedom of choice through dialogue was already a strong political argument in the reforms of the public sectors that began in the 1970s and 1980s in most Western countries (Norén and Ranerup 2019). City administrations now also face the pressure of moral, digital and global expectations. Often undefined, the excess of expectations coming from everywhere poses a challenge to the public sector (Woolgar and Neyland 2013); expectations need to be

transformed into information or evidence (Brown and Michael 2003). As noted by Löfgren and Czarniawska (2019), overflows tend to cause an emotional surcharge at different organisational and practical levels, which in turn need to be filtered or routinised again through the introduction of new skills, technologies and mechanisms that frame the excessive unknown as a matter of dialogue. As such, dialogue designates a breach with the universal procedures and cognitive categories of modern state functions. Dialogue as expectation and choice is thus fully embedded in contemporary city administrations as an aspect of achieving technical processes for the constitution of public action.

Such an observation is not new in essence, as Beck (1992) already made similar claims when he studied the rise of an expert-society in late modernity. Nonetheless they have substantially guided my interest in approaching the object of planning. To situate city planning at the core of contemporary disruptions is to ask more than just how urban change is subject to deliberative modes of governance; it is to ask how urban change and development is now articulated around situations rather than strategies, values rather than rules, or experiments instead of controlled conditions. Following this line of reasoning, it seemed apt to study three cities so as to inquire how the stabilisation of dialogic frames lead to specific modes of problematising the city in different contexts. What kind of dialogic experiences make city planning not only appear unproblematic, but desirable or good? Reflecting city planning in pursuit of good city life marks a fundamental disjuncture with modernist claims and reframes institutional planning as constituent of public logics. If we are to better understand city planning at the present, we need to investigate the possible configurations of an emerging good urbanism in essentially three ways: **(i)** how do different repertoires of dialogical action turn planning into an accomplishment, into a matter of shared citizenship, **(ii)** how has the city become an agenda-setting device, and, **(iii)** how do city administrations frame the openness of planning expertise through problematic situations and events?

Public involvement as accomplishment

Participation is probably one of the most employed governing statements in late modernity. Deeply embedded in the material and discursive formations of city knowledges, participation in planning is often granted the status of solution to a multitude of problems. To paraphrase Scott (2003), participation is the answer to problems which are never adequately formulated. An important contribution on this matter is Huxley's reflection on the different problems and solutions associated with participation. In her historical analysis she provides an interesting

account of how participation as a discursive frame and material condition reinforces certain knowledge continuities and possibilities to the point of becoming obligatory: "participation as problematization allows us to see commonly accepted starting points (such as Arnstein's ladder or the Skeffington Report) not as 'origins', but as instances of emergence in which already-existing conditions of possibility enable already-present things and discourses to be gathered together and made 'sayable' in particular forms" (Huxley 2013).

The reason it is important to bring this up in the context of good urbanism is related to the overwhelming role of citizenship in contemporary forms of deliberative governance arrangements. Outside of the controlled circuits of bureaucracy, participation has transformed from a means to inform people towards a mode of accountability, where the production of evidence is commonly framed as a collective experience. Urban audiences are tested and orchestrated with particular settings and instruments playing an ontological role in defining and representing active citizenship. As a result, issues such as sustainability or equity, or other themes related to the pursuit of good urban life come to exist not only as claims but become devised in certain participatory patterns, where 'hybrid alliances' are forged through experimentation and demonstration in seemingly uncontrolled settings (see also Callon 2004; Callon and Law 1995; Rosental 2005, 2013). Participation in planning is not only the end-point of many processes; rather, participation conveys a new sense of technical heroism which is translated into multiple technologies of citizenship (i.e. websites, exhibitions, associations, petitions, public hearings, municipal agendas, etc.)

The city as an agenda-setting device

That we live in a 'world of cities' is not only a parable; it is also an omnipresent gesture sustained by and materialised though urban agendas for at least the past two to three decades. In a globalised world, where knowledge-transfer has become the prime unit of measure, policy-models became the ruling metaphors of deliberative and reflexive governance: grounding authenticity, implying feasibility and signalling originality (see also Peck and Theodore 2010). As argued by Muniesa and Callon (2005) models are 'produced inside settings' and not only the outcome of distant transfers. According to this reasoning, models are objects that are formed and deformed to fulfil, respond or generate certain traits. This is particularly important for the present dissertation as models form(-ulate) programmatic agendas that stabilise particular modes of thinking and knowing the city; these municipal urban agendas then perform coherence through symmetry and disruption.

Figure 2 Three agendas with three modes of programming planning as means of public action

First, agendas bundle policies and connect them with existing rules and strategies. Agenda-setting in this sense has become an end-project of urban change in itself where future imaginaries are aligned with political propositions and institutional rearrangements. Agendas, are thus a techno-political gesture that creates a relational symmetry between government strategy and place identity. Agendas shape and allow particular readings of urban problems (Mitchell 2002). Second, agendas mark a disruption with the opacity of urban bureaucratic machineries; agendas produce a one-sided reality of policy-making at the public level.

These two moves where policy models are gathered across places to form their own signature as in the type of an urban agenda was the second insight and entry-point to approach three city administrations that have seemingly little in common but reconnect on so many other levels, as in the way they format or perform planning practices according to urban political programmes and how all three municipalities read complex urban problems as device to produce and relate to publics.

Problematic situations

My first visits to planning offices exposed me to what Barbara Czarniawska (2002) has named ‘work-worlds’, that is, settings, sites and sectors that constitute and redefine the very existence of our own worlds in terms that make them relevant and objective. Borrowing the concept from Benita Luckman, Czarniawska conceived of urban management as a sub-universe of the modern age. Accordingly, planning work is embedded in our existence and imagination

through institutions, categories and governmental mechanisms. An observation that also echoes Knorr-Cetina or Latour and Woolgar's analysis of laboratories and the fabrication of facts that relate to variable operations, classifications and contexts (Knorr-Cetina 1981; Latour and Woolgar 1986). What this means is that, in order for some function to be recognised and to count as a particular fact or procedure –say, calculative or deliberative– its components have to occupy a particular expert-position. But, these expert-positions reveal more. Taking a closer look at these bureaucratic circuits of knowledge-production then, allows us to inquire how expertise takes shape through contingent situations but also how the public sector is equipped to address certain ways of knowing and producing the city.

If we take the maps or codes that are at the disposal of city planners, we not only recognise how they miniaturise physical space in given ways but also how planning expertise sustains the reproduction of categories not only as rule but also as formula. This is not only the synoptic view from above that stabilises the city into a comprehensive unit, but the heterogenous arrangements of these material-semiotic conditions that sustain the multi-functional existence of planning to turn urban worlds legible (see also Söderström 2000). While these categories and practices have for long time rested on a 'calculating mentality'[11], they now need to make *other* urban worlds possible. Desires of urban order and control have been replaced by public values, moral exigences and technological opportunities. Regarding this aspect, it is more than interesting to examine how planning treats values as 'aspects of objective situations' [12]. On this score, Noortje Marres (2012), drawing on Dewey, has made an interesting suggestion, namely that objectivity in political decision-making processes is not only achieved by the integration of public opinions but through the constitution of what she calls 'issue-publics', that is the specific situations and objects that emerge as participatory responses to regulatory procedures and rigid rules allowing problems to modify, immunise or rearticulate governmental action. Or put differently, the acceptance of 'other' emerging experiences to re-compose the tradition of established politics, concepts, processes and categories.

[11] I draw here on Georg Simmel's *Metropolis and Mental Life* who refers to the 'calculating exactness of practical life' which "transforms the world into an arithmetic problem of fixing every one of its parts in a mathematical formulae" (seen in Mitchell 2002:87)

[12] To plan cities not only involves epistemic practices oriented towards a stable reality out there, but enacts the reality of cities in a range of specific ways (cf. Chapter 3 & 4)

Methodological note

Experimenting with the genre of ethnographic tales, I began my explorations of planning practice by inquiring how 'problematic events' emerge and compose urban worlds (Savransky 2018; Stengers 2000). Re-narrating how planning is a means of coming to terms with public problems, I approached cities as an ensemble of experts, governmental mechanisms and forms of *collectivity* presenting their own plots. The kind of tales that I rehearse in this dissertation are to be taken as 'radical empiricism' (Latour 2005b), because pragmatist ethnography as a mode of inquiry aims to lift the curtain behind planning practices, when urban issues become important situations of public action[13]. This is a move away from questions of representation and/or knowledge towards the problematisation and investigation of situations and events (Mackenzie 2005; Rabinow 2009). As such, when talking about event-based problematisations and the grammatical composition of particular urban situations and realities, the contemporary city does not only acquire a particular meaning because of a given geographic, political or economic context. The points of expressivity through which urban realities come to matter are constituted by their own lexicons, figures, networks and imaginaries beyond planning as an institutional technology, system or value-set. Such consideration argues in favour of situated and distinctive modes of search and an interest in examining how perplexed and troubling situations ring true.

The pragmatist inquiry-ethnography emphasizes how city planning intensifies common definitions of city-making. Such definitions are dependent on heterogeneous actors and events making them commensurate for public action; however, to become legitimate problems are constantly tested for relevance: this usually happens outside of planning offices. In line with the previously mentioned theoretical insights and problematic considerations about the pursuit of good city life, I conducted ethnographic research in multiple sites. The dissertation provides a series of ethnographic accounts of city planning by presenting three city administrations without attempting to compare them (Stengers 2011). Studying how municipal planning practices problematise public action, in three distinct cities, I undertook research stays in the municipalities of *Lisbon* (Portugal), *Vienna* (Austria) and *Zurich* (Switzerland) between 2014-2018. The empirical material in the dissertation appears in the form of descriptions, vignettes,

[13] I particularly think here with Isabelle Stengers, Donna Haraway and Bruno Latour, who insist that pragmatism is about telling how truth is short-sighted with common sense; how stories, things and events become matters of concern.
Importance means in this case an intensification of possibilities (Debaise and Stengers 2017)

quotes or photographs; it ranges from semi-structured interviews with key actors, over archival documents and descriptive encounters that took place in the context of political events. Digital platforms and social media were taken in account mostly to complement the ethnographic and archival material that was collected.

The chapters, an outline

Chapter 2 explores how the discipline of planning theory has established an actionable rhetoric that rejects the figure of the rational-comprehensive planner and instrumental rationality. I discuss how three distinct modes of planning theory seek to offer frameworks of action in relation to one of their shared general aims, defending the values of public interest. Building on this, I discuss how civic values have not only overthrown the problems that articulate planning but also contributed to an ontology and shared tradition of moral reasoning. With the good city as an object of desire/ideal-type, public involvement is the moral standard and central theme driving political reform of the public sector and the specialisation of planning. I claim that such positive conceptions for ethics reduce planning practices to a dichotomy between fact and value. Thus, public interest is treated as both: **(1)** a category opposed to rational calculation and expert authority, and, **(2)** an approach to dispute the totalising logics of institutional newness/forms. Drawing on ANT's pragmatist empiricism I argue that the category of the public, with its misleading conveyance of value-pluralism, reproduces old patterns of thought and is part of the problem it wants to address. I argue that contemporary post-political and institutional theories on de-/politicisation and de-/institutionalisation command the same attention to the role of planning locating the problems at the divide between expert/non-expert, fact/value and institution/non-institution. Finally I argue for the untangling/dislocating of these divides through a symmetrical, agnostic and empiricist analysis. In the following chapters, I discuss how public values are co-constituted through the formulation of problems.

Chapter 3 offers a theoretical program that justifies the use of the lens of problematisation to study the co-constitution of planning as a mode of public action. Here I will first rehearse how three thinkers –Dewey, Foucault and Callon– understand the study of problems. From there, I not only argue in favour of inquiry instead of theory but also go as far as highlighting the relevance of inquiry by showing how indeterminate issues are delimited into problems through situated moments, historical factors and designated passages. While Dewey thinks of problems as not pre-existing inquiry, Foucault and Callon allow for a 'second order' approach to understand how certain ways of problem-making are scripted and performed through multiple

'others' such as continuities, failures or disruptions in the past or in another domain. The chapter then focuses on three dimensions in which planning constitutes public action. The purpose of this chapter is twofold: to understand what has happened to planning after public knowledge was introduced as a policy instrument and civic booster. With public knowledge complementing planning's bureaucratic management role as favoured means to control urban change, the chapter invites to study of the ways in which city planning has affirmed different modes of rationalising urban change by engaging with public matters in three distinct ways: administration, justification and experimentation.

Chapter 4 will discuss the use of ethnographic method as a radical empiricism. By devising a mode of inquiry focusing on contentious situations, I discuss the purpose of inquiring into situations across various municipalities to study planning. Drawing on ANT's empiricism I open up a debate regarding what it entails to study 'truth-in-the-making' without positing contextual frames. To situate practices beyond their specific geography is one aspect of this process; to inquire how various figurations of planning raise and claim their worlds is the second aspect. I refer particularly to the methodical strings of 'assemblage urbanism' so as to 'thickly' describe how problematic situations constitute their own material-semiotic worlds. Grasping the contours of situations and problems is only possible through encounters. I explain how these encounters have not only drawn my attention to disruptive moments, but also how they have shaped my understanding of how 'the unspoken', 'the hidden' or 'the implicit' complements the articulations of technical and political propositions. This leads me to a reflection on my fieldwork experience. Tracing situations, documents, events and programs was key in analysing how problems are consolidated in processes that validate their own world. Juxtaposing analytic and configurational frames was crucial in recognising the mutual dependence between planning and public action through various overflows.

Chapter 5 explores how planning norms play into the achievements of public action. By examining the prescriptive disposition of planning practices, the chapter discusses how urban problems are continuously ordered, distributed and relocated into categorical work. I will focus on how structural density has become the new norm in the Swiss planning apparatus. Emerging from the problem of urban territorial sprawl, structural density is sometimes interpreted as specific and sometimes as a holistic approach to consolidate urban order. In this case it is interesting how categories are embedded into architectural operations and planning systems. Attention is drawn towards the form-based production of images and scripts whereby public

matters only take up a marginal role. The public interest is just another category often implicitly enacted in normative processes of categorical work to normalise urban order.

Chapter 6 explores how planning as a mode of public action is seeking coherence through the coordination of programmes, meetings, workshops and other passage points. In particular, the chapter discusses how unknown futures are arranged into projections of 'the now' through a mix of replicable numbers, virtues and references. Experiencing a rapid increase in population, the problem of dynamic urban growth reframes planning at the nexus of calculability and liveability. With the wide dissemination of cooperative projects, planning attaches public value to technical expertise, while, simultaneously, technical procedures benefit from a range of circulating references that qualify future conditions of possibility as collective project. Hence, publics are not only framed by categories such as population but also translated into figures, whereby figures turn into users determined by the capabilities of urban territories to anticipate future predictions.

Chapter 7 addresses the progressive openness of planning as a mode of public action. In recent debates about institutional change, transparency is a term that has gained in significance. It is important here to understand transparency not only as a principle but as the ability of governments to articulate and perform technical expertise in a domain external to their actual operation. To disclose information is more than a political model but also a process of demonstration, where interventions are validated and completed outside of bureaucratic operations. Viewed in this way, transparency is not only an outcome of successive political and institutional reforms, or the product of international policy circuits, but the shifting into presence of previously hidden mechanisms influenced by the rise of audit. The chapter engages with the ways that planning frames citizenship as a direct outcome of interventions in the built fabric. By reflecting on how rehabilitation was made feasible as a collective achievement, I then discuss how inaugurations turn planning into an eventful act in which good governance is articulated as an object of urban citizenship. With the offer of public demonstration that transcends institutional and procedural forms, problems are framed as opportunities turning attention to the characteristics of the city to animate dreams of urban harmonisation. However uncertain and contested, rehabilitation rather than a defined problem is performed as an event aiming to associate multiple issues to constitute a holistic urban solution.

CHAPTER 2.

PLANNING (in) THEORY & THE POLITICS OF VALUING

2.1 City planning in a specialist world

Today, the practice of planning always involves the consideration or estimation of a situation's fair and civic value. With practically every governmental action subject to the scrutiny of public opinion, the (moral) obligation to deliberate, to be accountable and legitimate is a case in point for the normative prescriptions that ethical planners advance but it also shows how the conduct of public action is accompanied by some interpretation and expectation of the good, of acting on behalf of everyone's interest. No matter how technical a project is, it is understood that a share of the public needs to be involved since the action has inevitable long-term impacts on various entities and ends. The idea of the common, of inclusivity is not new to planning theory but it is deeply entangled in theoretical schools and professional trajectories. How is it then that a field as vast and diverse as planning theory constantly pursues normative theories to do good and be right? A straightforward answer to this would be the long tradition in utopian thought[14]. A less obvious answer lies in the exploration of the good as a normative hallmark between knowledge and action; not only to question how normativity is formed within the field of planning theory but also how it is formulated as a political question against the background of a constantly changing and evolving profession. The following chapter studies how the extended specialisation of planning as a government-led profession has led to various intellectual projects where normative considerations lie at the centre of the discipline's knowledge production.

When planning theorists started discussing and debating the technocratic objectivism of the modernist planning project, which was grounded in a physicalist-Newtonian perspective, action- and value-centred views suggested a more pluralistic understanding of values (i.e. good city life, shared public space etc). According to these emerging theoretical viewpoints, city planning came to be studied as a governmental action which displays a double pluralism of values: one which commits to the valuing of the public interest to combat rule-making practices and one which puts the stress on how planning ethics work. When the specialisation of planning was discussed against the background of scientific rationality, bureaucratic complexity and

[14] Not the least since the Greek or Roman empire until the present day, public life has been expressed through places and forums, like the city. While the city is an appropriate starting point for discussing the value of public life, planning thought, it has been argued, is detached from real and existing phenomena. Instead planning thought works on images and voices; in particular against those of decline or disorder (Jacobs 1961, 1983). More than that, it formulates rules and norms to overcome pejorative outcomes in order to claim and achieve better cities (see Lynch 1984).

institutionalist rigidity, the 'value-laden nature of planning' itself became an object of extended theoretical value-creation. Before exploring how the recognition of values is entangled in matters and principles co-constituting public action, which will be addressed in the remaining (empirical) chapters, this chapter takes a sharper look at how, in the face of professional becoming, pragmatist planning theories deal with, or react to, normative positions as a problem to be overcome through situated notions, deliberative actions and the integration of public aspirations. The chapter concludes with a discussion on a key mode of ANT's intellectual project —*matters of concern*— in order to debate how normative foundations recreate their own presence, apparatuses and collectives by relocating the new discussions along the same divides: fact/value, exert/non-expert and/or certainty/uncertainty. Suggesting how ANT's pragmatist empiricism might do otherwise, I close the chapter by arguing that values articulate problem-formulations and therefore must be examined empirically.

The advancement of planning expertise

Since when has planning become a problem-solving activity? This question implies there were times when planning was not oriented towards the solution of problems. In October 1986, the former president of the *American Planning Association* (APA), Norman Krumholtz spoke at the conference of APA's Ohio Chapter about his vision of the future in city planning (Krumholz 1987:87). In this talk, and by reviewing, what he calls, 'planning's recent past', Krumholz made the observation that many academics and others struggle with 'what city planning is'. For him (ibid.:87), defining planning has always been simple:

> *«I define city-planning as a problem-solving process of decision-making which includes the identification of problems that the city needs to solve.»*
>
> *— Norman Krumholtz, 1987*

This definition of city planning is different from the profession's roots in the American reform tradition[15], where city planning was about straightforward applications of design standards. Before being replaced by the idea of city management, planning was dominated by architects, designers or environmentalists. Krumholz makes use of two emblematic figures of the city to

[15] When planning emerged in the US at the end of the 19th Century, reformers were looking to improve and sanitize the urban built environment. With economic and social conflicts as a threat, the early planners (i.e. engineers, architects and landscape designers) 'rescued' city form from their undisciplined state (Beauregard 1986; Boyer 1986; Cronon 2009; Scott 1998).

illustrate the change in status of planning; he talks about the 'City Beautiful'[16] as the architect's city and of the 'City Efficient' as the business-dominated city, half run by governments, half headed by business agencies and civic leaders. His optimistic vision of planning is neither one; to find a stronger ground amidst professional diversification and privatisation, planners will *"maximise their relevance to the changing political scene by broadening their roles and by participating in the tremendous vitality of American pluralism"* (ibid:5).

In Europe, Patsy Healey observed a shift in the practices of planning from regulating land-use rights to the management of spatial organisations (Healey 1997). Diagnosing the growing diversity, quality and complexity of our environments, Healey recognises the difficulty of defining what planning is, especially in the light of institutional differences. In her programmatic and normative reformulation, she defines planning as *"an approach to governance which embodies a policy-driven approach, a long-term and strategic orientation and which interrelates economic, social and environmental dimensions of issues in ways which recognise their complex space-time dimensions"* (ibid.:82).

The struggles to define planning is, to return to Krumholz's claim, caused by the diversification of career paths. Healey's observation is more targeted at institutional transformations. In other words, planning is increasingly fragmented in city governments and the subject of institutional differences. The trend towards diversification has led to the search for generic urban professionals that are not only prepared for traditional public roles but also for non-profit and private sectors. Beauregard has made a similar observation. The loss of planning's synthetic approach comes with more bureaucratic tasks and was especially displaced by what he calls 'moral purposes' (Beauregard 1990). Not only is governmental planning no longer about city-making but so has the profession has been reshaped by social and political issues (ibid.:211)

> *«Planner's gave up their synthetic approach for a fragmented, formalistic, and reductionist view of the built environment comprised of divisions along functional lines.»*
>
> *— Robert A Beauregard, 1990*

The synthetic viewpoint was abandoned in the face of the increasing complexity of problems and specialized functions. In classic political terms, Western planning approaches entered a *"system of governance in which technically trained experts rule by virtue of their specialised*

[16] Late modernity eclipsed the planner's self-evident connotations with engineering and/or architecture and led to the collapse of the unitary city ideal (Graham and Marvin 2002; Joyce 2003; Murdoch 2006).

knowledge and position in dominant political institutions" (Fischer 1990:17). Commonly referred to as 'technocracy', these political changes did not only engulfed planning but diversified the purpose of action. Since the 1960s, specialization has become inherent to planning and a force that is undermining planning as a coherent discipline and practice. Planning's specialisation is a consequence of its spread across state and local governments turning the profession into a bureaucratic endeavour. While some have opposed the rise in bureaucracy with the loss of the practice's utopian vision (Friedmann 2000), others wish a return to debate physical issues instead of political problems[17]. In sum, civic and social problems have not only led to a discussion of the profession's conduct but pose a challenge to the very understanding of rules and views, designs and values.

In this regard the debate between Altshuler and Friedman in the *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* which occurred in 1965 is of interest. Altshuler (1965) re-introduced the principle of 'comprehensiveness' in order to reintegrate an overall approach to planning no matter how specialised the profession has become. The overall approach is determined by a 'factual and causal knowledge' of the public interest (ibid.:196). Since planning is about translating goals into governmental action, all of these goals need to be conceived as for the purpose of serving the community.

> *«[…]every governmental planner, no matter how specialized, must be guided by some conception of the public interest.»*
>
> *— Alan Altshuler, 1965*

Altshuler observes that planning has become much more concerned with 'middle-range'[18] recommendations reducing their understanding of problems behind analytical forces. Long-term objectives thus become secondary because the interest is to permanently maintain formalities without engaging concerned groups, civic affairs or objectives. This discussion about the achievement of comprehensive goals in no way undermines the achievement of

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[17] Mandelbaum & co. identify a moment of great consensus in the community that has recognized, *inter alia*, a disappointment with grand theories: *"The severe forms of both positivist and normative theory that used to command the intellectual heights and draw us to them now appear as a mirage that retreats or disappears as we approach it. Our rhetorical variety is appropriate to praxis and to techne — the only forms of knowledge within our grasp. Aristotle's theoria is an empty category."* (see Mandelbaum, Mazza, and Burchell 1996)

[18] A comprehensive understanding of planning was introduced by Meyerson who pleads for a middle-range approach instead of holistic (Meyerson 1956)

operational efficiency. For Alsthuler, the pursuit of both means and goals are not indissociable. Since planners are occupied with decision-making in their realm of authority, they can *"devote all their time to thought about city problems at the most general level"* (ibid.:192). The tension between governmental efficiency and the benefit for all is shown by a discussion between wholes and parts.

> *«[…] even in pursuit of their own specialist goals, planners operate in a world of whole objects, not analytical aspects.»*
>
> *— Alan Alsthuler, 1965*

The reason why planners are not only considered to be specialists lies within the recognition of the city as an area and object of interest. The city being more than only a functional unit, the planner must remain vigilant. Functions, programs and other miniaturisations of the whole require a huge effort in coordination. Here, planning differs from mere coordination or management because it is not only about articulating governmental complexity, but active choice-making in pursuit of substantive goals. More than a function, planning must be plausible in its articulation of values and rules for the greater benefit, thus Altshuler's conclusions which he drew from extensive observations and studies undertaken within city planning departments (Altshuler 1961, 1969).

A prompt response to Altshuler's article came from Friedman (Friedmann 1965). Appearing in the same journal issue, the reply basically agrees that planning should be reimagined, both as a profession and institution. Friedman takes up Altshuler's exercise to readdress the image of planning with one *"that is more consonant with the institutional setting in which planning must occur"*. Drawing on a growing list of studies on planning practice, Friedmann observes the duality between the conception of the planner's role and the formality imposed by executing policy and program decisions. In a nutshell, the ideal of comprehensiveness, as advanced by Altshuler, is about the articulation of special knowledge to serve the public interest. In Friedman's words:

> *«The city planner views himself as the stern guardian of the public interest.»*
>
> *— Alan Alsthuler, 1965*

Friedmann's response starts with a broad definition of planning:

> *«I shall define planning as a way of managing the non-routine affairs of the city. This is a broad and loose conception that intentionally extends the scope of city planning activity beyond its present preoccupation with the physical arrangements of objects in space to all the subject concerns for which the city carries a responsibility.»*
>
> *— John Friedman, 1965*

Not only are the profession's fields of competence growing but also the concerns that come with each of these technical abilities. Friedmann here takes up the tension drawn by Altshuler between the speciality of technical abilities and the universality of values. To uphold the ideal of comprehensives is not to train a holistic view but to maximise the coordination of specialised technical expertise to the solution of urban problems. Friedmann's proposed solution to bridge middle-range action and 'the achievement of performance goals for the city as a whole' is to think, formulate and revise urban development policies as a *process*. This could be achieved by enlarging the scope of city planning 'to include all matters of interest and concern to the city' and by establishing coordination programs and sectors that link up directly to the 'decision-making structure of the city'. Friedmann's argument does not stand in sharp contrast to Altshuler's reflection on implementing more comprehensive ideals but is way more suggestive and practical. Not only in terms of reconfiguring rules (function) and means (methodologies) but also by dismantling the conception and relevance of the public interest into variables constituent with the effectiveness of institutional setting and technical expertise.

The public interest revisited

Beginning in the 1960s, planning theorists started to debate the notion and idea of the public interest as an 'aggregative criterion'. While the general interest was long discussed as a distant if well-meaning objective to be protected, 'pluralism' and 'choice theory' came to not only disrupt idealized public policy but also to reframe the role of the planner from a regulator to an advisor or 'dealmaker', to borrow Beauregard's designation; balancing out various interests in an era of governmental centralization, planning and public policy has been formulated so as to serve and account for specialized public interests. With the political evolution and governmental changes of Western societies during the 1960s, planning was increasingly absorbed by the State and analysed by, or with, frameworks of state-theories such as Weberian or Marxist interpretations (Cooke 1983; Hall 1983). Importantly, with an unstable context of practice, and contending professional views, the role, wisdom and goals of a centralist planning model was challenged and underwent a 'paradigm breakdown' (Yiftachel 1989). It became clear that there was no consensus about the public interest or the feasibility of reaching such a consensus because governmental action was found to neglect or harm the interests of particular groups. The emergence of critique in the field of planning theory was directed to 'muddle through' the power relations in public administrations (Forester 1984).

Before exploring how the plurality of interests and choices came to be discussed in the field of planning theory, it is important to take a step back and understand how detachment from rational-comprehensive models gave birth to new directions in planning theory. Rooted in the bastion of scientific rationalism, the rational planning model is based on a scientific mode of systematic analysis (Alexander 1984). Unison was found in the critique and confrontation of positivistic theories. Since rational policy and technocratic decisions are based on an ideal assumption, 'abstracting from the messy "real world"' (ibid.:23), the critique is often addressed to the 'scientific planner-analyst' (Mäntysalo 2005), who is satisfied with explaining, determining and predicting the phenomena of the world based on a self-image of neutral observation. Later consensually referred to as a 'problem of knowledge' (Friedmann and Hudson 1974), not only instrumental views were challenged but any attempt mounted to centralise planning as a professional practice was associated with the significant role that local governments played in shaping and constituting values. Although early contributions directed to the 'politics of planning' (Meyerson and Banfield 1964; Rabinovitz 1986) revealed that planning and politics were deeply entangled, showing that policy processes were far from being a rationale-professional practice, the voices in the field of planning theory have remained mainly preoccupied with how to move beyond, or deal with the imposition of political hierarchies, constraints and reforms through more purposeful action.

An interesting account of the encouragement of democratic urban government by means of planning processes is Paul Davidoff's figure of the *planner as advocate* (Davidoff 1965). Advancing the notion of pluralism in planning, Davidoff describes advocacy as a role performed by professional planners. Inspired by the role of the 'legal advocate', the advocate planner is not an adversarial figure, but one whose position and function works by means of persuasion. The driving force is to stimulate considerations and mediate adequate planning solutions for a variety of interest groups.

> *«The advocate planner would devote much attention to assisting the client organization to clarify its ideas and to give expression to them. In order to make his client more powerful politically the advocate might also be- come engaged in expanding the size and scope of his client organization.»*
>
> *— Paul Davidoff, 1965*

The practice of plural planning and the concept of advocacy reflects an understanding of planning in a conflicting society. The planner here does not act in the public interest as a whole but for particular groups or communities that need assistance or professional viewpoints. A few years earlier, Davidoff co-authored a paper with Reiner where they introduced the notion

of 'choice theory'. Departing from the definition that *"action is the eventual outcome of planning efforts, and thus, a theory of planning must be directed to problems of effectuation"* (Davidoff and Reiner 1962:103), the article discusses at length the value-formation process of the planner's responsibilities (ibid.:106). Choice theory not only discusses generally the difference between facts and values but discusses the implications for the role and education of planners by nuancing the planning process into three analytical stages —evaluation, identification and effectuation— contributing to a higher synthesis of the planner's activities in a pluralistic society.

In a historical context where planning was increasingly political, the traditional-technocratic outlook was regarded as bounded and insufficient. A point made by the Fainsteins (Fainstein and Fainstein 1971) as follows:

> *«While the planner himself may not be a political figure, an enacted urban plan constitutes the substance of a political decision.»*
>
> *— The Fainsteins, 1971*

Not only were democratic and socialist theories on the rise but also conduct in the name of the general good was contested due to a broad spectrum of political values. Recognising the plurality of public decision-making was a way to become increasingly aware of the distributive effects of planning and public policy. The rejection of the public interest as a whole had a profound impact on planning theory and practice. On this matter, Klosterman debated the introduction of the public interest as a meaningful criterion (Klosterman 1980). Klosterman pointed out that the public interest is not the sum of individual interests and makes an observation of how facts and values are grounded in a descriptive/prescriptive divide. On the one hand, there exist rational and objective techniques as they are, while on the other hand, ethical issues emerge as how they should be. This divide becomes particularly clear when planners want to promote public interest. As Malcolm Tait observed later on, drawing on Sandercock and Dovey (2002), the public interest[19] was a unit of analysis for modernist planners to analyse a problem and arrive at a solution (Tait 2016). The discourse in defence of the public interest as advanced by Klosterman and other early planning theorists, proved more

[19] The ambiguity of the public interest as a criterion has been harshly criticized within the field of planning theory (see also Alexander 2002), especially by Moroni who realizes its ineliminable criterion and therefore urges the necessity to wrestle not only with the complexity and value-pluralism of the concept but to reconstruct how it may be relevant today (Moroni 2004).

difficult to sustain in the face of the unstable definition of the common good and given the rise of public involvement as means of conducting planning (see also Tait 2011).

Professional Ethics and Justice in planning

As within any professional advancement, value orientations have been discussed in the field of planning theory beyond the scope of the political. A professional planner carries with him a full range of ethical and moral obligations. An early attempt to discuss the professional obligations of planning was done by Peter Marcuse (1976). Identifying different sets of professional ethics, Marcuse urges planners to rethink the profession's functions and tasks and for who these assignments serve. Marcuse's approach to planning discusses the means of professionalism by which aspirations might be met. Value orientations as in the determination of ends was considered the province of political activity. We have here a clear separation between the generation (or evaluation) and the representation of values. This call for a more systematic approach also reflects concern for the public interest (Hoover 1961). However, Marcuse's main point is that ethics and professionalism do not equate to more 'public interest'. While planners may choose or advocate, and act according to professionally devised standards, Marcuse is in favour of ethical prescriptions as modes of enforcing the value-guidelines within the profession. On a more programmatic note, Klosterman has made similar observations (Klosterman 1978). With the risk of professional ethics turning planning into a more efficient exercise, Klostermann revisits different conceptions of ethics to offer alternative foundations. In defence of moral principles, Klosterman's implications for normative planning would combine scientific reasoning and ethical criteria, which, once developed, would *"provide a rationally defensible basis for the evaluation of public policies"* (ibid.:43).

The importance of normative prescriptions is also discussed in Susan S Fainstein's epical, and much cited work *the Just City* (Fainstein 2000, 2010). Arguing that planners need a normative theory of justice, Fainstein suggests that 'democracy, 'diversity' and 'equity' become first-order concerns of urban development and planning. Drawing on Rawlsian[20] theories of justice, she argues in particular for the recognition of social group differences. By doing so, Fainstein sketches the limitations of the dominant communicative approach

[20] John Rawls proposed a contractarian theory of justice arguing that the recognition of social group differences cannot be subordinated to individually distributed fairness (Rawls 1971).

explaining that the deliberative policy-way of addressing the public good produces unjust outcomes reproducing economic and structural inequalities and political domination. The normative theory, then, endorses a 'capabilities approach' so that all the enunciated norms – democracy, diversity and equity– can be upheld sufficiently by moral individuals in order to reconcile and achieve just urban planning outcomes.

Fainstein's book has become a reference far beyond the discipline of planning theory. Explorations of the concept in practice have led to a proliferation of extended capitalist urbanisation as criticised by David Harvey and Cuz Potter (Harvey and Potter 2009). The theme has been widely engaged with urban theorists and planners . Peter Marcuse has expanded on Fainstein's concept and urges to address city issues as "problems of the commons as a whole" (Marcuse 2009:101). For Marcuse, the problem of city planning is that it is concerned with 'immediate actions within the existing distribution of power and legal regulatory systems'. Acknowledging Fainstein's aim to break these patterns with the recognition of longer-term normative issues, he urges for a commons-oriented approach; *Commons Planning* differs from *Justice Planning* as it is not only concerned with the examination of problems in order to achieve justice in any particular sense but it also addresses the power relations producing the problem.

Two decades before, Patsy Healy and Rose Gilroy ask 'what knowledge and *what values* does and should a planner bring forward?'(Healey and Gilroy 1990). Suggesting an epistemological and ethical consciousness, or thinking through what constitutes knowledge and how it is valued, Healey recognises the relational nature of planning practices specific to contexts and institutions. Important in these accounts is how the sense and identity of places are connected to the ethical consciousness of planning as a practice. While Healey gets often associated with communicative urban planning practice, where the path to a just end is constituted by discursive means, she was one of the first ones actually recognising that the planning project is strongly and inherently normative, incorporating issues of value, good and ought (2000: 917). How planners are supposed to act and behave is not only an intellectual but also an ethical challenge. As Hillier points out, Healey's work always had ethics as a core consideration: from responsibility to distributional implications, the ethical consciousness asks whether a distinction is possible between knowledge and values (Hillier 2015b). Drawing on Healey, we see a different kind of normative theory: one where ethical thinking is not tied to utopianism or prescription, but one which is more close to insurrection, based on the identification of moral

codes which relate action to a set of universal values, to eventually offer new insights into ways of thinking and doing.

How planning's value-based conduct could be performed otherwise is a question also posed extensively by Heather Campbell (2002, 2006, 2012a). Discussing the ethical implications and moral obligations of planning practices, Campbell extends early interpretative debates (Hendler 1991; Howe 1992; Krumholz and Forester 1990; Wachs 1985). An important contribution to the field was *Utilitarianism's Bad Breath* (Campbell and Marshall 2002) — one among her many collaborations with Marshall on the subject of the public interest (Campbell and Marshall 2000, 2006)— where both authors distinguish between utilitarian and deontological interpretations of the public interest. Utilitarianism measures value by the condition of desire (or pleasure, happiness) while deontological approaches conceptualise the public interest as procedural, premised on the protection of rights and the focus on deliberation and dialogue. In addition, Campbell has been determinant in reflecting practices of *situated* ethical judgement. Arguing that value is an inescapable part of planning, Campbell not only re-conceptualises the notion of justice for planning but considers the notion of judgement as practical in the formulation of 'reasonable' collective action. Departing from a relational view of justice, Campbell urges to bring back values into *Justice Planning* and to *situate* judgement as practical wisdom, which ultimately provides the link between reasoning and justice. To bring values into the practice of judgement is a way to circumvent 'the good' or 'the just' as a value-neutral high-ground and to make decisions based on various insights, visions and evaluations.

2.2 Is Planning about *doing good* or *being right*?

Since the 1960s, most mainstream planning theories seek to build an argument that justifies planning activity in terms of both: **(i)** the ability to analyse events coherently (*being right*) or **(ii)** the good effects it will have (*doing good*). This observation was made by Charles Hoch in 1984 and represents a major contribution to the field of planning theory. Highlighting how the concept of planning is 'amazingly similar to the concept of human action' suggested by pragmatist thinker and philosopher John Dewey, Hoch sketches striking parallels between the five most cited planning theory readings and Dewey's pragmatist philosophy of action. Drawing on Dewey's philosophical work, especially his understanding of how public problems emerge from action, Hoch analyses the conceptual similarities between mainstream American

planning theories and Dewey's ideas about common action along three moments, that are sought to close the gap between *doing good* and *being right*: these, Hoch sums up, are a combination of **(1)** identifying problems as a form of problematic experience, **(2)** formulating plans as a form of inquiry and **(3)** implementing plans as a form of democratic action.

Hoch's argument that planning theorists (involuntarily) use the pragmatic concepts of experience, inquiry and participation to bind theory to practice shows how instrumental reasoning is, and how entangled it is with values. Not in a static sense, but in a way that contentious situations are solved as an exercise of practical judgement. At the core of Hoch's work lies the idea that 'how panning theorists conduct inquiry shapes the ideas they create' (Hoch 2020). His exploration of pragmatic ideas, which has spanned decades, for now, however, reveals much more. Including practical judgement at the centre of planning, Hoch's pragmatist explorations closed a presumed knowledge-action gap and the doing/being nexus by asking how specific visions and values reconcile problems while suspending rules. This pragmatic integration turns imagined judgements and options susceptible to and constitutive of action. Or, to put it otherwise, if the idea of being right is a matter of vision, it still needs to inhabit action while doing good becomes a matter of action (Hoch 1994).

As noted by Healey as well, this belief in truth and the cocreation of good cities is a mask anchored in 'humanist' orientations (Healey 2009). If you consider and convey intentions and visions to be superior to action, you end up with knowledge claims that seek to establish moral ground and achieve epistemic value. The justification of planning theories seems to belong to those two spheres of interest, classifying the activity either as a moral concern or as technical activity that seeks reliability in political or technical procedures. Following this early pragmatist reasoning, Hoch makes an important contribution that acknowledges how the activity of planning is reproduced according to a rule/value divide.

2.3 Planning Theory and Pragmatist thought

A vast and explicit contribution of pragmatist thought to planning and public policy was made by Donald A. Schön (Schön 1982). Analysing planning as a 'system of knowing-in-action', Schön incited scholars and practitioners to learn and reflect through practice. Inspired by Dewey, Schön's main contribution to planning theory was the emphasis he put on the ways professionals succeed and fail; and how they learn through situations. The reflective way, then, is a self-reinforced achievement. An approach Schön calls 'balancing act'.

> *«The problems the planner sets for himself are the problems of balancing these several constraints. In order to review effectively while preserving his credibility as an intermediary, he strives for thoroughness and clarity but also insists on presenting his review as preliminary.»*
>
> *— Donald A. Schön, 1982*

This Deweyan-inspired approach where situations and roles require framing comes from the observation that the conduct of planning cannot be ensured by knowledge systems or consensual understandings of the public interest. With the contexts of planning practice evolving, the planner needs to cope with issue-specific targets and fashion compromises through affirmative action. The reflective practitioner chooses to play an intermediary role through framing situations and strategies of action whereby inter-personal and inter-dependent choices command or constrict their capacity (Schön 1983). While Schön does not see the reflective practitioner's ability to trial and error as representative, he at least sees the situations in which planners experience problems as generic and relational.

Building on neo-pragmatist[21] ideas, John Forester later introduced the notion of critical pragmatism (Forester 1993). This reformulation of pragmatism and planning was more concerned with the political dimensions of planning work. While Schön was interested in how professionals develop and reflect their methods and expertise, Forester's concern is with the micropolitics of planning. The way planners learn in political settings is thus also a question of morality and deliberation. In the face of power and conflict, the transformative potentials of practices are at the centre of Forester's pragmatist argumentation (Forester 2013). Often overlooked, Forester's contribution to the field of planning theory is far more known for the emphasis it puts on argumentation and acts of deliberative democracy (Fischer and Forester 1993). Yet, as shown by Healey elsewhere, critical pragmatism addresses the actual possibilities in situations characterized by diverging interests and values so as to explore the power relations practically.

A strong element that remains constant throughout Forester's work is the notion of power (Forester 1982). Linking pragmatism with critical scholarship is a move beyond the analysis of problem-framing to study the contingencies of power relations. In a critical mode, Forester emphasizes the importance of going behind the framing of routines and looking for the transformative capacity through of situations and practices by reframing performances . The

[21] Neo-pragmatist philosophy drawing on Rorty and Bernstein reanimated theoretical debates in the fields of public administration and public policy in the US 1970's and 1980's (Bernstein 1983; Hoch 2006; Rorty 1982).

pragmatist inspirations shaping Forester's work thus have had a significant influence on planning theory[22] especially with the development of interpretive approaches in planning and policy analysis and the subsequent work on deliberative democracy where story-telling or consensus-building have started to play an important role (see also Cook and Wagenaar 2012; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Laurian 2009).

During the last two decades pragmatism has had a revival in planning theory. Not the least since the focus has been drawn on the role of institutional transformations. Pragmatism has been resuscitated, or at least extended as an approach for analysing the articulation of norms and aspirations (Salet 2018b). An important notion propelling this debate is the idea of purposive action. Elaborated by Salet, and drawing on pragmatist ideas, purposive action occurs within normative conditions and contextualising processes (ibid.:5) Hence, the legitimacy of planning is analysed by its capacity to integrate 'public norms and aspirations in processes of action'. The rise and importance of this scholarship draws on late theories of new institutionalism, which understands existing structures not merely as burning glasses of a certain Zeitgeist but approach institutions as an open and changing organisational form. Institutional change has an effect on technical knowledge that planners embrace but planners also shape, at least to a certain extent, the normative aspects of institutional transformation (Alexander 2005; Beauregard 2005).

Despite the focus on institutions in action, Salet reaffirms the different orientations of the public interest and as such pleads that planning processes should be intentional, although these are of experimental nature since these take place in a largely unknown world. He does so convincingly, because he thinks of purposive strategies of action as performative rather than conditional. Nevertheless, the lens of purposive action, with its heterogenous and indeterminate understanding of public norms and approaches still recreates a normative divide between good and bad*; "many solutions may be attempted but ethically relevant and good ones are only those solutions that prove to be effective"* (ibid:18). While Salet, in a truly pragmatist vein, does not separate meaning from action, he still introduces the notion of *consequentialism* to show the consequences of action in practice. Such a position is in line with the idea of Dewey's pragmatism (or as he preferred 'experimentalism') but also gives the impression that the

[22] John Forester's focus on and analytical frameworks for 'personal stories' as a means of understanding the faces of power and conflicts of value are, according to Healey and Campbell, analytical precursors of what has come to be known as communicative planning theory (Healey 1992; Innes 1990, 1995)

'situational ad hoc logic', as Salet describes it, co-evolves with 'patterns of norms in society'. Such a path-dependent understanding of society as a relatively stable whole displaying certain ends, contexts or durations, leaves aside rather indeterminate processes of association, in which let's say planning might be connected to world-making claims and conditions of possibility outside the realm of its immediate modes of knowledge-ordering.

2.4 Planning and the crisis of valuing

The influence of pragmatic ideas in planning theory is often downplayed yet it seems obvious if we think of planning theory as a discipline which is very much preoccupied with bridging the gap between knowledge and action, means and ends (Campbell and Marshall 1998; Friedmann 1987). As pragmatism challenges the very idea of pre-existing conditions, it comes as no surprise that the situations and problems that the authors describe tackle different orders of value. Foremost though, they implicitly and explicitly challenge the reproduction or usefulness of normative theories of planning: communicative planning theory, the just city approach and the insurgent planners concerned with the politics of difference. Yet, as Healey noted, pragmatism has also contributed to the normative planning project by its focus argument to pay closer attention to situated particularities and the challenge of "*acting in the world*", of "*forming new conceptions and making judgements in the worlds of governance practices*" (Healey 2009:11).

I do not aim to re-conceptualize the normative foundations of planning theory, but I want to take up the traced route and re-focus on the distinction between facts and values. As seen previously, a value-oriented approach has been successful in reorienting theoretical waves around the specification of planning from ethical and prescriptive to deliberative, actionable, situated and legitimate accounts. The public interest in these approaches does not need to be defended or only mediated, but has turned attention towards relational issues and practices of framing, interpreting or moralising.

However, the pragmatist emphasis on contentious situations has held a scarce interest in the formation of value as an ontological effect of these indeterminate situations. Hoch discussed plan-making at large with a focus on scenarios etc. Salet speaks of value as something inherent to the transformation of public norms and the volatility of institutions. Despite these efforts, the focus on how various kinds of concern overflow or suspend rules of planning expertise and how practices reframe values remains largely unattended. It is precisely here that an empiricist

engagement driven by pragmatist ANT-conceptualisations enters into the equation. As I will discuss further in *Chapter 3*, I will argue that an inquiry of problematisations is suited to studying the co-constitutive value-formation and -articulation of planning practices as public action.

Matters of concern

A difference between pragmatic approaches in planning theory and the reformulation of the pragmatist tradition in ANT is how they understand the ability of comprehending public action. First, pragmatic approaches in planning theory still focus on the distribution of power and rationality contesting the legitimisation of rule-bound expertise, especially through the prism taken by Forester and the deliberative scholars. The focus still lies on the comprehension of planning as a 'constructed' polity whereby critique, situations, power or aspirations are notions introduced to explain its asymmetric orientation. Second, pragmatic explorations in the field of planning theory make an analytical distinction between the institutional order and the order of aspirations (Salet 2019). Although this scholarship acknowledges that the two orders are deeply entangled in practice, it suggests that associations follow a certain logic or path-dependency. Planning's calculative frames are not exceeded but merely replaced by other good intentions and possibilities.

In sharp contrast, an empiricist engagement drawing on pragmatist-inspired ANT does not make these two assumptions; to the contrary it conceives of power (i.e. facts and rules) as mundane and orders as multiple, emergent and hybrid. Consequently, an pragmatist-empiricist ANT engagement not only denies the understanding of public values as a whole but zooms in to inquire into the making of contentious situations which it sees as moments of valuation, good or bad passages, or processes of issue-stabilisation, whereby facts might be elevated to the object of public debate or concerns politicised to the extent of becoming facts. Or simply, to put it in a Latourian proverb (2008:38):

> *«A matter of concern is what happens to a matter of fact when you add to it its whole scenography, much like you would do by shifting your attention from the stage to the whole machinery of a theatre.»*
>
> *— Bruno Latour, 2008*

An pragmatist-empiricist engagement therefore moves beyond the restrictive understanding of deliberative and purposive action, to ask how practices that lead to the making and legitimation of good city life are problematised and co-constituted. Such an approach follows planners

because, as Evelyn Ruppert put it so accurately, it does not *"underestimate how in practice, city making does indeed involve defining and articulating visions of the good city"* (Ruppert 2006:4). Where critical and institutional pragmatism sees value and public action in relation to broader mechanisms of power or normative conditions of public norms, an empiricist engagement argues that there are enduring concerns, mutual tensions and parallel truths about what co-constitutes the good city and aims at investigating how the good city emerges from situations and operations that sustain, suspend and reframe both the expert's rule and the public's legitimacy or value.

Take for instance the situation when a mayor takes the stage and inaugurates the reconversion of a site into a public green space. As we are about to see in *chapter 7*, as an elected official who represents the highest order of the executive he claims that the long-term planification of this green infrastructure is not only a way to reattribute technical expertise into a public service but that this is collective act whereby the city receives a new face. In this case, the mayor translates various concepts such as transparency or citizenship into values that themselves provide and feed into the valuation of the city as an object of truth. In the mayor's understanding, he uses the power that is attributed to him in order to mobilise technical expertise and put it at the service of the public interest. Institutional pragmatism would analyse two different orders: how expertise is dependent with institutional capacity and how aspirations reshape institutional orders. From an empiricist vantage point however, as will be seen in *chapter 7*, the reframing of technical know-how is not only an extension but as a practical and procedural achievement of public action. The role of public action in this case is to articulate concerns and issues that have insufficient public visibility or legitimacy as a characteristic practice of urban public involvement. In order to satisfy the democratic demands of contemporary governance accountability, public action is a way to draw the attention to particular operations. Following an empiricist-engagement thus leads us to understand how urban truths not only circulate as whole or parts but how these reframe indeterminacies through the value-definition of sites, settings, lexicons and events.

A distinctive feature of ANT's pragmatist accounts is the particular observation how disputed and contested objects are taken into shared consideration. From this viewpoint, critical or institutional pragmatism do not attend closely enough to the problematisation of planning practices. An empiricist view takes uncertainty to be a central framing and counter-framing of public action ultimately leading to a shared re-composition of the expert/non-expert divide. This shared re-composition is to be found in how problems or issues are made visible, viable

and legitimate to carry out the mutual constitution of planning problems as a mode of public action as in the pursuit of the good city (Farías and Blok 2016a). Before examining how planning practices become the object of empirical investigation, we will establish a theoretical program in the following chapter suitable to inquire how public action is performed by multiple contours and procedural modes of problem-formulation that mutually stabilise the meaning and matter of planning.

CHAPTER 3.

PUTTING PLANNING TO THE TEST OF PROBLEMATISATION

3.1 Studying the problematisation of the problematic

In the previous chapter, I reviewed how planning theorists reframe the normativity of planning practices against the background of the professions' specialisation. This tension is most visible by the attempts to *do good* and *be right*. I also outlined three ways of enacting pragmatist thought in planning theory. To this end, I argued that those efforts inspire my own argument; building upon these efforts that offer a prescriptive portrait of the value-laden nature of planning practices, I aim to describe how problems and action mutually constitute each other. Therefore, as I have briefly sketched, I am interested in how everything incalculable is turned into *shared expertise*. To cope with unknown situations is not an exclusive concern of the expert but becomes a matter of distributed and shared concern. More than that, uncertainty becomes part of actual experiences, ethics and epistemologies; in a planning context, this means that values are a formative element of practices, whereby indeterminacy and closure are part of routine actions. This approach to value-formation departing from indeterminacy to continuity, from problem to solution, from concern to fact, is an integral part of planning practices constituting public action. Before I come to that in the last section of this chapter, I will discuss how problematisation can be used to study actions, situations and values that appear whole or unproblematic. This, as I will argue, requires an appreciation of *the absent* and a study of *the mundane* (i.e. moments, processes and passages) that constitute common knowledge and stabilised value-categories that explain action on behalf of the public.

In this way, the many interactions between knowing and valuing encountered in planning theory need to be considered beyond the prescriptive gesture to reflect the normativity of actions. Instead, if we focus our attention on how rules and values co-exist in ways that they are considered 'good' or 'common', we may start to rethink the expressive relation between a field of practices and the frames in which they are conceived, apprehended and problematised. Or to put it in another way, the heightened concern with how to do good theory in and of planning might be better thought of as a problematic undertaking that arises from the constant requirement to make the discipline or practice relevant to emergent urban issues.

In light of this understanding, the present chapter develops a theoretical program to this question of doing good theory and therefore is an invitation to think *problematically* about values, theories and concepts. Engaging planning through the lens of problematisation enables us to further develop the pragmatist tradition in planning theory and formulate it through an empiricist engagement as proposed by pragmatist ANT-scholarship. While the analytical figure

of problematisation entered the ANT canon through Michel Callon's ground-breaking article on scallops, as a synthetic step in the making of associations through translations, the explicit reference to problems gradually disappeared. Through the lens of 'matters of concern' or 'issue-publics', problems here generate the demand for other formats of democratic engagement. Before coming back to this subject later on in the chapter, we need to make a pause here and first explain why problems play such an important role in ANT's commitment to empiricism. Problems do not pre-exist their formulation, they emerge when a solution is needed. Problematisation therefore is a reconfiguration of existing relations between actors, assessments and practices; an action or situation that pulls the semiotic and the material apart through uncertain, partially-known or entangled contrasts opens them up, or as John Law and Annemarie Mol (2002:85) put it:

> *«Most everyday practices make use of, or try to create, scales to measure or contrast 'goods' and 'bads'. This opens a space for an empirical philosophy. An ethnographic interest in practice can be combined with a philosophical concern with 'the good' to explore which 'good/bad' scale is being enacted, and how this is being done.»*
>
> *— John Law and Annemarie Mol, 2002*

The appropriation of problematisation in ANT is closely linked to a strong commitment to the idea and conduct of inquiry. Echoing Dewey's seminal work the *Logic, the theory of inquiry* (Dewey 2008[1938]), ANT is committed to investigate the ways in which actors in practice deal with philosophical matters: what is good, how does it become right etc. In this sense, inquiry is not only a mode of analysis but an exploration into the politics and perspectives of truths. More than an analytical reflection upon the world, inquiry is therefore an active extension of what certain actors know or believe beyond the immediacy of the situation. This points to three understandings of problems: **(i)** as a mode of analysis, problematisation questions by whatever means a problem emerges so as to become amenable to solution, while, **(ii)** as an object of inquiry, problematisation can be described as a process of concerns becoming truths by being treated, categorised and analysed, and, **(iii)** as a hybrid articulation, problematisation is as much a passage-point as it is an identifiable and enduring inscription.

One of the main tensions in planning theory, as traced in the previous chapter, is the contrast between *being good* and *doing right*. To problematise these two instances, supposes we get rid of categories well established and represented in the field and practice of planning. This fundamental revision of the rule/value and knowledge/action distinction that governs planning thought is only possible if we locate and probe the hermeneutic torments of good theory-making. In the following pages, I propose an agenda, leaning on a staged conversation between

John Dewey, Michel Foucault and Michel Callon in order to move beyond critique and transcend normative claims. By approaching planning thought *problematically*, I argue that planning should leave behind the search for a coherent and prescriptive object of good analysis. Instead, I suggest a configurational focus that makes knowing and thinking a form of public action at particular conjunctures.

From theory to inquiry (with a little help from Dewey)

Emilie Gomart and Maarten Hajer's *Is that Politics?* (2003) offers an important account of the multi-dimensional role of planning practices. Not only asking who but also *how* and *where* politics perform, Gomart and Hajer exemplify how recent developments in contemporary politics seek to extrapolate the 'crisis of legitimation' and address new problems in the world. In questioning the *ways of doing* politics, both authors recognize the experimental nature of policy programs and make a call to open up politics to empirical inquiry. Playing with the notion of 'good experiments', which they draw from ANT-inspired work in STS, Gomart and Hajer extend the debate on public development in politics. Diagnosing two problems in these political science debates, they argue that the emergent forms of political action that have coincided with the demise of classic-modernist political institutions should be the object of analysis. Not only do they show how different forms of planning politics co-exist, but also how new practices displace and legitimize planning strategies in other terms, settings and processes. Their will to *empiricise* the question of politics follows John Dewey's work whereby 'politics' can be understood as the specific work of evoking and constructing collective actors which would not exist otherwise (see also Marres 2007).

Explicitly combining ANT's commitment to empiricism with the legacy of Dewey was a relatively new undertaking when Gomart and Hajer's book chapter appeared back in 2003. Prefiguring ANT's intellectual project, Dewey had always played an implicit role in Akrich, Callon, Latour, Law and Mol's early work, where the question of politics is always entangled with moral issues and how various *'goods'* get performed. Put differently, the political question was framed as who is it that acts and with what capacities is this someone able to enact or perform (in) science, technology, economics, law and medicine. These early versions of ANT, in asking who takes part in decisions and how they are made accountable, accepts science and technology as *politics by other means*. The relation between science and politics is settled with the problematization of 'the Moderns' as a self-evident abyss. It is with Callon and Latour's

more extended engagement with markets and law that political forces become more visible (Callon 1998b; Latour 2004b); simultaneously Dewey's influence and the input of US pragmatist thought becomes more palpable (see also Marres 2019). While Latour's journey into the world of law as a peculiar *regime of enunciation* shows how law is a particular form of world-building, materialised by its own conditions and relying on its own references of true and false, Callon's move into market economics highlights how the value of goods are demarcated or compromises calculated when collectively organised around devices. As shown by Javier Lezaun (2017), these iterations not only mark an empirical exploration into other orders of action, but show a research program that is capable of identifying the values that animate the lives of 'the Moderns'. Harman (2014) goes a bit further and explains how Latour's interest in law, ecology and politics is not only driven by the intention of inquiring into various socio-material achievements but by an exploration of how 'truth politics' is provoked by intermediary objects and effects that render the political world natural and indisputable.

With the multiple configurations of emergent democratic politics reshuffling the constellation and interaction between actors, capacities, and urgencies, we witness what many scholars, particularly deliberative policy analysts call a *dislocation of politics* (Hajer 2011), that is a series of political moments, repertoires or mechanisms where institutional politics become unhinged, yet technocratic normative codes of conduct remain partially intact and valid. In these emerging configurations the separation between science and politics, between experts and lay people, disappears or gets displaced. Yet this technocratic normativity, which places rules over values not only remains partially operational but new mechanisms emerge that juxtapose practices to address public problems. This is where John Dewey becomes so important for the present dissertation for essentially two reasons. First, to understand how issues and publics are co-constitutive, which is key to understanding the democratic potential of public action: where there is no issue, there's no public and without the latter there is no possibility of democracy. Second, to develop a pragmatist approach that multiplies existing mechanisms beyond holistic understandings of governance and politics often treated either as matter of organisation or composition; to develop a specific kind of empiricism that pays attention to the articulation of problems as matters of concern, as well as to the constitution of shared expertise as the political consequences of problematisations.

To escape planning theory's enduring tensions, I want to take up the first point mentioned above, where it becomes important to understand Dewey's pragmatist state-theory in which publics and problems emerge from situations. As already mentioned by Gomart and Hajer

(2003), Dewey's concept of inquiry has been taken up in political science, or at least by 'deliberative policy and planning analysts' (Hajer and Wagenaar 2003). Instead of focusing on 'problems', 'solutions' and 'decisions' as separated entities, this scholarship (featuring people like Wagenaar, Cook and Hajer) uses a pragmatist lens to study the intimate relationships and path-dependencies between knowing and doing. By emphasizing an active search to study the situated and acquired quality of knowledge, this deliberative scholarship relies on the concept of practice and inquiry to investigate the formation of contemporary political forms.

While deliberative policy scholars gained momentum in planning theory by studying the articulations of deliberate action and knowledge, their understanding of Western democratic politics often approaches policy-making through the analysis of discourses as 'an ensemble of ideas and concepts that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices' (Hajer 1995:44). Planners, policymakers and administrators exercise and accomplish their functions by solving practical problems as a lived experience which is forged by narrative functions. These narrative functions are both a form of practical judgement and a kind of practical deliberation. Remaining sympathetic towards their practice-based perspective, I prefer to dwell on the very notion of inquiry which Wagenaar and Cook (2003:142) equally term as practice: *"Inquiry, or practice in our terms, is thus always transformative. This is why Dewey often calls it 'productive' inquiry."*

Instead of focusing solely on the transformative and productive aspects of inquiry in the formation of whole political forms, I aim to focus on Dewey's inquiry but to have a better grasp on problems which do not pre-exist situations. On a more philosophical level, I am interested in how the sense of the problematic is a more-than-epistemic issue. How facts, logics and action are not only subject to their own mode of deliberation or argumentation but relate to situations, settings, sites and/or calculating devices to inquire what is the public's problem. While deliberative scholarship focuses on public problems and ways of deliberating and dealing with them, it neglects their articulated or experimental dimension. Consider, for instance, this example where Wagenaar and Cook analyse how good practice is not just an individual achievement. Looking at the expansion of the Schiphol Airport, both authors examine how professional practices interfere in complex problem-definitions and how these shape the issues of public deliberation. In their analysis, policy problems become constituted in local realities and agreements continuously unfold in the enactment of concrete practices.

But what happens if situations in public deliberation not only operate as an object or method of inquiry, but also as moments in which problems are articulated as properties of the real and the good, or otherwise.

Drawing our attention to the problematic in planning situations will eventually illuminate the metaphysical anchorage in the normative framing of deliberative policy-forms, and the enactment of theory as prepositional to action. To conduct an inquiry in the Deweyan sense will eventually lead to an analysis where the problem is not taken for granted. Although deliberative scholarship does not aim to produce a universal theory-enunciation, it separates the problem (i.e. legitimation) from social categories that are used as explanatory factors for the re-invention of politics by policy making. Not only do the modalities (i.e. situations, sites and settings) of the problem change but also who is concerned by them. To focus on the formulation of issues through situations and the enactment of territorial logics goes beyond such a deductive problem/explanation comprehension. In a way, this has been attempted by recent planning scholarship drawing on, or revolving around ANT-thinking. For instance, Jonathan Metzger's (2013) work on the enactment of regional strategies from various stakeholders and how these do not precede planning processes but are rather achieved through an elaborate series of procedures is such an example, where problems are a matter of articulation. Accordingly, who is to be considered a stakeholder or, as in the case of Schiphol, what is considered an airport, is a fundamentally ontological issue, where various entities, subjects and orders come together.

For Dewey, publics emerge when problems are not adequately dealt with in existing institutions. From this pragmatist point of view, the central emphasis lies precisely there: how can indeterminate issues bundle up into a problem. To distinguish from things we already know, Dewey suggests another mode of search, which he terms inquiry. Inquiry here is necessary as it helps us situate and clarify the perplexity of logics, actors and factors which are at play around problematic situations. Taking up on Dewey, Stark shows how 'Dewey's evocation of perplexed and troubling situations' provoke inquiry, as these are the situations where problems get formulated; or to put it in Stark's words: *"When we see inquiry as action, we see search less as a process of finding what we already know to be valuable than as distributed practices for recognizing opportunities by re-cognizing resources"* (Stark 2011:9). In reformulating the object of urban studies to take into account politics in action, Ignacio Farías has argued, that Dewey's account on inquiry "*involves recognizing that we, urban*

students, often confront radically uncertain situations in which we don't know what we are looking for until we find it"(Farías 2011:367).

With John Dewey, and his question "*what is politics?*" (Dewey 1927), we certainly go beyond an understanding of politics as a particular and fixed institutionalised form. In return, and this is essential, these collectives emerge through political action. When reading Dewey carefully, the public is an emergent category that varies according to political forms and actions. Or as described by Gomart and Hajer: " *'The public', then, is a category emergent through scientific, technological and political practices. The 'state' too is an emergent category referring to the actions necessary to defend and protect this harmed' public'. Politics then is the simultaneous construction of 'state' and the 'public', individuals and collective, represented and representative"* (2003:57). This is the crucial point for the ways that planning constructs collectives and pursues or propagates good politics. Accounting for the joint problematisation of planning and public action requires making some analytical choices to understand how institutions function, how modalities vary and how categories account for the particular format and framing of problems.

If we take what is problematic *à la lettre*, certain arrangements and displacements are necessary to turn indeterminate but problematic situations into a set of issues. What I take from Dewey's work, more than a ready-made methodology that can be applied and reapplied, is an attention to the very indeterminacy of how modalities and actors frame and counter-frame, formulate, re-articulate and instigate the issues.

> *«There is not at first a situation and a problem, much less just a problem and no situation. There is a troubled, perplexed, trying situation, where the difficulty is, as it were, spread throughout the entire situation, infecting it as a whole.»*
>
> *— John Dewey,1933*

Those issues constitute publics, whereby publics can only be constituted through issues. That planning affairs could raise public concerns is not new and was already debated by Jane Jacobs in her famous 'battle for the city' against ruthless urban planners such as Robert Moses. By engaging with new issues though, planning practices bring to life new programs and produce new evidence and concerns by urban redevelopments such as turning streets into pedestrian entities in the name of good interventions.

Another aspect of inquiry, as mode of analysis is its emphasis on problem-making, or the reflecting on how problems are not only posed or formulated, but how they are situated as conflictual process:

> *«A variety of names serves to characterize indeterminate situations. They are disturbed, troubled, ambiguous, confused, full of conflicting tendencies, obscure, etc. It is the situation that has these traits. We are doubtful because the situation is inherently doubtful.»*
>
> *— John Dewey, 1938*

Endorsing an analytical position that problematises, accounts for how particular characteristics of contested objects are considered. This point is most poignantly discussed by Noortje Marres (2007:722) in her work on *issue-politics*, to which I will return later in this chapter. Thus, problematisation involves a commitment to empirics, whereby inquiry (just like critique) is a transformative activity that starts with a problematisation. STS scholars, in particular the ANT-school with its strong commitment to empiricism, claim therefore to pay particular attention to how problems, conceived and perceived as issues, generate political consequences that mobilize concerned groups, reframe rules and thus open up interstices for new or different problems to emerge. As stated by Brice Laurent (2017), issues do not only generate the possibility of multiple solutions but also lead to the formation of new publics. Entangled together in a flat ontology of objects, ANT insists on conceiving problems as issues that generate political consequences. As pointed out by Andrew Barry, *"the specific kind of empiricism espoused by ANT* raises questions as to which problems are not articulated as objects of concern, as well as which voices may be excluded in the process of problematization." (Barry 2020:7).

In hindsight it is important to note how such a mode of analysis diverges from existing approaches that examine the connection between planning expertise and public action. As new modes of democratic governance expand and blur the frames of city planning and technocratic public action, some planning scholars argue that it is important to note how previously apolitical planning expertise now becomes 're-fashioned' according to new logics of competency. As Raco and Savini (2019) argue, the rise of a new urban technocracy problematises how particular forms of expertise are mobilised and determine public action. While I could not agree more that technological governance is affecting public governments, I remain less deterministic in my observation that the legitimacy of experts 'becomes the surrogate of politics, determining the actual goals of actual public action' (ibid.:8). The difference between Raco and Savini's approach and the Deweyan mode of inquiry, that I

endorse, is that the latter does not whatsoever make a distinction between planning's technicity and its *publicness*; or put differently, planning problems and public action are co-constitutive.

Conceived in this way, inquiry is a permanent exercise in problematisation. One that takes seriously the way indeterminacies are remedied and suspended; thus asking how planning practices effectively capture, translate and approximate new urban problems beyond the experience of the moderns. Additionally, active inquiry into these discordant and indeterminate situations reveals how thinking is configured between actors, places, disciplines or contexts and, therefore, characterises certain injunctions as democratic, valuable and relevant to the extent of explaining and accounting for the tensions and impasses identified. In an article where they interpret 'the new' as a consequence of indeterminate situations, Hutter and Farías (2017) discuss how disruptive moments make us appraise the world. Drawing on Dewey they argue that what makes us establish connections and thus attribute meaning and assessing value **is** the re-composition of indeterminate situations. To inquire how planners deal with breaches in continuity and qualify uncertainty is an explorative mode of analysis that starts with a problematisation of the real. Deploying a pragmatist means of inquiry, then, rethinks the symmetries between knowing and doing that institutions, actors and modalities occupy together through specific situations.

Problematisations: Bringing Foucault and Callon together

Problematisation comprises the modalities and instances through which problems are tackled. In other words, problematisation refers to the practical and discursive mechanisms that turn questions and issues into a problem. For both Foucault and Callon, problematisations always entail two sides: First, it is paramount to understand that problems are not pre-existent but formulated, hence composed, and, second, how problem-making renders only certain solutions possible as constituent of various 'objects of thought'. Here it is paramount to specify what we mean by 'objects of thought' as they represent different units of analysis between Foucauldian and ANT problematisations. For Foucault, objects of thought are the particular expressions that offer a certain range of possible solutions. In this sense, when we think of problematisation with Foucault, we seek to describe the conditions of possibility that certain questions allow

for[23]. For Callon and fellow ANTs, objects emerge as socio-technical arrangements or hybrids. This perspective adds to the analysis of problems its capacity to be distributed and re-allocated, thus mobilising new actors and generating new problems.

While the question of problematisation as a mode of analysis has been dealt extensively by John Dewey (see also Boltanski 2014), it is Foucault and later Callon that have most effectively translated the notion into a mode of inquiry where problematisation is not only understood as an uncertain, indeterminate and transformative situation but as an analytical position whereby various actors problematise (Pottage 2014). Pottage's review of Rabinow and Bennet's *Designing human practices* (2012) precisely designates this 'second-order' analytical gesture in a situated manner, that is, an observation of practices which continuously rethinks and describes ontologies as they emerge whereby the analyst situates him-/herself *in a* relation of knowledge to knowledge, Hence, city planning would need to be treated not as something found out there, but as a self-evident practice and object.

I want to suggest an adaptation of Foucault and Callon's notion of problematisation to study the ontological grounds and politics of planning in today's political age. This type of inquiry, I propose, signals a particular mode of governing through problems that bring together specific types of expertise, apparatuses and cognitive operations. The notion of ontological politics is borrowed from Annemarie Mol (2003). Introduced in her seminal book on anaemia as a medical condition it is enacted in various ways. Mol makes the point that reality, in this case, is not a socio-material construction but an enactment tied to sets of political choices and conditions of possibility. By rethinking ontology as the real and the possible, Mol observes how institutions and practices are shaped by problematisations of what is acknowledged as competence and what is disregarded by omission.

It is important to mention here that problematisation comprises another dimension further to the mere application of inquiring and/or reflecting the problematic constitution of practical and productive situations as seen with Dewey. For Foucault and Callon problematisation instead foregrounds the ways involved actors *positively* engage to turn their problems into exercises of establishing meaning. A view of problems on a positive account, needs to be understood in the

[23] Paul Rabinow explores the notion of problematization in Foucault's work and contrasts it in a compelling way with Dewey's inquiry of problematic situations. For him, the defining trait of Foucault's problematization is a dual relationship between the *problematicness* of a situation and its constitutional condition which has stabilized over time (Rabinow 2007, 2011)

ways value is generated with regard to novel objects. Take for example Ossandón and Ureta's (2019) analysis of marketized policy interventions in Chile; showing how problematisations bring new apparatuses into being, whereby undefined issues become constitutive problems through a set of given situations. This implication brings with it an evaluative and a temporal edge. In other words, practices which occur in specific situations always make reference to problematic instances and modes of ordering that are anchored in some kind of dis/continuity. Simultaneously, situations always relate to a multiplicity of positions that constitute possible political realities and values. Something Law describes as a relational logic. To be clear, in this understanding of past and performative problematisations we are not speaking of *epistemes* in an epochal sense but of their relational effects that are distributed over time but also space, scale and other contexts of action.

To study planning practices empirically from this point of view would mean that we ask how it was technically democratised over the last few decades, transiting from a bound administrative strategy to a complex polity, symmetrically aligning public action as matter of collective concern.

But how should we theorise or evaluate these transitions or processes of stabilisation? As I will discuss in the following section, bringing together Foucault and Callon allows us two types of problematisation as a mode of analysis: one where problematisation is considered as an ensemble of processes stabilised in a more or less permanent way through problem-definitions and instruments, and another, where problematisation are *agencements* constantly reframed by 'various material and cognitive elements that constitute individual and collective action' in order to establish processes that qualify goods (see also Callon 2009).

3.2 Problematising city planning

In the previous chapter I have focussed on the ways in which planning has been specialised as governmental practice and how the field of planning theory re-evaluated public action with normative intentions of applicability. As I have reviewed and suggested in the previous section, planning as policy-making has been recognised as a deliberative 'knowing-practice' ending up in argumentative discussions to rethink its legitimation in compliance with newly emerging political forms. From this I first invoke the importance of studying the indeterminacy of modalities as a way to understand its various components and processes of accommodating

problems. Secondly, I draw on Foucault and Callon to understand problematisation as both a process and agency.

If we take the above as a cue to understand the path dependencies between rules and values, knowing and doing, planning and public action, we may approach the specialisation of planning practices as joint problematisations whereby public action is evaluated, contested and stabilised. In order to understand how problematisation occurs, it is necessary to pay closer attention to **(1)** *moments of valuation* **(2)** *the processes of stabilisation*, and, **(3)** the emergence of quasi-robust associations, whereby public problems are always a matter of configurational co-constitution.

Moments of valuation

As elaborated in the previous section, deliberative accounts of policy and planning analysis take the existence of decisions and evaluations as practices of deliberation. This interpretative understanding of how planning decisions come into play in policy-decisions takes into account the diverse narrative and argumentative capacities that are shaped by the normative expectations of the professional commitments that public administrators are held to. While Deweyan pragmatics play an important role when analysing practical assessments resulting from a mutual achievement between rule-based micro-applications and the value-driven elaborations of agenda-settings, categories such as values, publics or society remain explanatory factors to appreciate the ways practitioners formulate and construct problems. Not only are decisions explained as argumentative practices and interpretative approaches, they are also questioned by the understanding of values and discourses as formative elements. From this point of view, value informs the acquisition of knowing and reference-frames or discourses.

Patsy Healey et al.'s (2003) essay on deliberative governance is particularly revealing as to how, in this regard, good practice is not just considered an individual achievement but also a transformation of the historical, cognitive, emotional and experiential capacity of a particular community into purposeful action. The question of how values get stabilised (over time) is implicit in their analysis in two ways: first, in the ways discourses or frames of reference are analysed by an evaluation framework and developed within the tradition of interpretive policy analysis, and, secondly, in the ways knowledge resources may have the capacity to be mobilised to transform places for the better. Deliberative and interpretive traditions of policy

analysis do take these situations seriously, at least to the extent of respecting Dewey's philosophy for a practical and epistemological justification for more direct understandings and participatory forms of democracy. In contrast to an empiricist engagement, these traditions forget to attend to what Rittel and Webber and have called *wicked problems* (1973); wicked in the sense of dilemma, as explained by Campbell and Marshall (1998), and not as complexity.

Without wishing to contradict the above policy scholarship, but in light of these observations, I will rely on the study of situations as moments of critical valuation to examine how dimensions overlap rather than only inform each other. Echoing the recent debates in valuation studies, I adopt a methodological situationism *à la Dewey*, considering empirical situations as contested and constructed moments of value-formation. In contrast to Healey's methodological institutionalism and focus on planning work as capacity-building, a focus on situations provides a heuristic for empirical investigation, where the values attributed and the tensions expressed not only show singular or temporary events but recognisable, evocative and disputed occurrences. Or to put it in Hutter and Stark's words: *"moments and situations are characterized by the particular social assemblage of persons and things that are in place and in motion during a span of time"* (Hutter and Stark 2015:4).

On this matter, Jenny Lindblad (2020b) has demonstrated how 'being sustainable' equals 'being good'. Instead of thinking sustainability as a stable category applied to urban areas, Lindblad shows how sustainable urbanisms rely on specific moments where efforts and resources are e/valuated for such an achievement to happen. 'Being sustainable' is thus a precarious and momentous achievement that in practice either demands further action or runs the risk of becoming reversed.

Processes of stabilisation

Planning theorists have also debated the relationship between theory and practice with and against Foucault. John Forester in particular criticised Foucault's theory for its lack of applicability. This is a long-standing issue in planning theory, that theory must inform practice for it to be relevant. Foucault's approach to reassessing existing norms, with no direct implication for concrete solutions was one aspect of critique. This could be summed up by Forester's slogan: "Theory asks, practice answers" (Forester 1989:259). The other aspect of critique towards Foucault was his faulted attempt at activism. Nevertheless, Fischler makes an interesting point in claiming that Foucault would find much to his liking in communicative

planning theory (Fischler 2000). Discussing how (communicative) planning theorists that ascribe a pragmatist role to planning theory are also the object of critique by Foucauldian planning academics interested in the exercise of power, Fischler basically points out that both sides are wrong: Pragmatists make the error of not studying the broader framing and particular contexts of public problems and Foucauldian academics fail to take into account the situated and discursive interaction of planning practices.

I couldn't agree more with Fischler's position and yet I want to focus on a very particular point that Fischer discusses as a methodological contribution. Drawing on French historian Robert Castel, who explains that problematisation is synonymous to genealogical inquiry, which 'is an attempt to recover the memory of today's formulation of a given issue' (Castel 1994:250–51). In this context, problematisation is how an assemblage of actors and practices makes sense of messy problems, shaping people's attention, delimiting possible solution and seeing situated innovations being adopted on larger scales (1989, 1997). Thus, the way situations become problematic, or challenged, is more than a matter of regard (or perspective); it is a process where the order of things is being stabilized.

> *«Thought is not what "inhabits" an action and gives it meaning; rather, thought is that which permits a certain distance from a manner of acting or reacting, that which makes it possible to make that manner of acting into an object of reflection and to make it available for analysis of its meanings, its conditions and its goals.»*
>
> — *Michel Foucault, 1994*

Based on the assumption made earlier, that planning not only produces its own problematic situations but also co-constitutes public action and hence actively shapes the rules for living together in a good urban society, we may move forward to ask how public problems stabilise, and with what kinds of characteristics are they endowed within planning practices. To unpack the coherence of planning practices, of the ways goods and values are ascribed validity, they must be analysed beyond specific situations and everyday practices; processes must be understood in relation to institutional, societal and political change. Communicative planning theorists are also interested in these questions with the aim of turning that which currently exists into a new utopia. This is where Foucault would vehemently contradict pragmatist, normative and deliberative planning scholarship, where he would argue that good ideas and participatory practices constitute a problem-space that emerged from the possibilities of thinking about a given phenomenon. This phenomena in action would be subject to processes of transformation (i.e. politicisation or institutionalisation) with coherent sets of new practices emerging. A remarkable illustration of this is given by Margot Huxley (2013) showing how

participation as problematisation has led to the reality where participation is seen as a common solution to a set of problems in planning theory and practice enabling it to address particular democratic and political deficits.

This is instructive for a number of reasons. If something is constantly debated as a problem, or declared within a framework where the same solution is produced to answer a set of diffuse problems, this indicates how repetition in the formulation of problems establishes an order of continuity. Prisons, schools or hospitals were such past inventions and they offer institutionalised solutions that continue to delineate the conditions of possibility in the present. Other techniques of totalisation such as the use of statistics show explicitly how a technical argument is extended to the political sphere establishing new foundations, equivalences and aggregates (something that Law (1993), in reference to Foucault, calls modes of ordering) between individual behaviour and globally calculable, traceable and predictable problems.

The notion of sameness, repetition and non-interruption is central to Foucault's work where he speaks extensively about *processes of stabilisation* (with the emphasis lying on processes). In other words, things get stabilised but do not remain in that same state of affairs permanently; only to produce certain 'patterns of correlation' that can be redeployed or recombined (Dawes and Collier 2011). The appearance of stability is always dependent on the inclusion of teleologically ordered patterns of relations. This is what Huxley refers to as commonly accepted starting points that set the conditions for particular forms of action. To think with Foucauldian problematisations is to call to attention the fragility of self-evident urban planning problems and their solutions.

Good (and bad) passages

Callon's work on scientific controversies describes the distribution of 'problematic situations', which refers to the transformation, domestication and constitution of statements as being problematic. The 'problematic situation', which Callon borrows from Karl Popper refers to the itineraries by which scientific controversies receive allegiance or opposition. To define what is problematic and what is not is subject to struggles and negotiations. More specifically, for Callon the study of problematisation 'is vital to understand the rules governing' through which reality becomes problematised. 'Forces of problematisation' are thus the many mechanisms that create frontiers between what is to be analysed and what has to escape analysis. One aspect of reality is thus considered relevant over others whereby an inside is created. This moment of

definition and delineation is afterwards often demarcated by autonomy. Provided with a strong framework, positions and references that lead to the formation of programmes, patents etc. become black-boxed. Ultimately, to be convincing and acceptable, problems and their solutions need to be made into *obligatory passage points* (hereafter OPP):

> *«Problematisation culminates in configurations characterised by their relative singularity. There is not one single way of defining problems, identifying and organising what is certain, repressing what cannot be analysed.»*
>
> *— Michel Callon, 1980*

If one follows this reasoning, problematisation is the gradual shaping or 'multipolar convergence' of a problem through operations that construct heterogeneous associations.

> *«Each protagonist organises and problematises reality in his own original manner in keeping with his own idiosyncrasies, his own background and the particular conditions in which he finds himself.»*
>
> *— Michel Callon, 1980*

This shows that problematic statements and stabilization devices are related in mechanisms of translation, which Callon refers to as networks, that do not solve problems but rather displace forms of problematizing in order to produce robust associations between actors and material entities. What is important beyond the fact that certain problems get displaced from previous conditions of conception or assessment, is how their trajectory constitutes new problematic situations. In this sense, to inquire into problematization draws attention to how new co-configurational relations emerge[24].

The notion of problematisation was central in the early formulation of ANT. The key insight here is that practices of problematisation entail the reconfiguration or translation of relations between actors, things and meanings. Part of ANT's intellectual project, this rejection of ad-hoc differences between objects and subjects went along with a committed empiricism. To study how problems fit together in specific arrangements through 'passages' has been at the

[24] Using the example of the attempt to reintroduce scallops in Brittany after a drastic population decline, Michel Callon develops the concept of translation as a network formation in four moments: (1) problematisation, (2) interessement, (3) enrolment and (4) mobilisation. Problematisation brings together four (human and more-than-human) actors –three researchers, the scallops, the fishermen of St. Brieuc Bay and scientific peers– at an "obligatory point of passage" (Callon 2006: 149) that determines the further direction of the process to expand scientific knowledge about the hitherto poorly studied mechanisms of settlement of the scallops and to restock the population. In further course, the actors sharpen their profile in relation to each other and in their definition of common interests and demarcations from each other. In a "mobilisation of allies" (ibid.: 159) as representatives of the interest groups, the researchers ultimately fail as spokespersons for the other actors. At the same time, Callon shows the fragility of all connections.

heart of such empiricism. As shown by Ingunn Moser and John Law (1999), passages are movements between specificities. But this movement is a specificity in its own right. The whole focus on problematisation is such a passage where some aspects get debated and specified. Much like when one passes from the bus to the metro station and then, based on an series of events, one decides to take the taxi instead. So, according to Moser and Law, *'the argument has to do with specificities and the relations between specificities'* (ibid.:201)

Note that, while Foucault directed his analysis to the stabilisation of problematisation, Callon is more concerned with the *specificities* and the *passages* that come along with these specificities. Once we start attending to specificities, we may start acknowledging the emergence of hybrid objects. As denoted by Callon in his co-authored introductory piece with John Law and Arie Rip on *How to Study the Force of Science*, hybrid objects and collectives are socio-technical arrangements emerging from how problematisations demarcate realms of possibility (Callon, Rip, and Law 1986). In the glossary of this same edited volume we can find the following entry (ibid.xvii):

> ***Problematisation***
>
> *Most generally, a form of translation (q.v.) that posits an equivalence between two problems that requires those who wish to solve one to accept a proposed solution for the other. Accordingly, a form of control that involves imposing an itinerary upon others by making oneself indispensable to them. In science this itinerary usually starts with a general problem which can (if the problematisation is successfully imposed) only be resolved by the solution of a much more specific problem proposed by a particular laboratory (see funnel of interests). In other words, scientific problematisations usually impose a detour through a specific research site.*
>
> *— Callon, Rip and Law, 1986*

To sum up, the expansion of the expert's network building capacities and activities is brought into focus by Callon. As exemplified by John Law (1984) and Mike Michael (2017), problematization is not only the starting point for processes of translation to commence and continue with circulation, but all these instances depend primarily on whether they can withstand *trials of force*[25] — whatever resists one moment in the chain of translation becomes more and more condense into what is inscribed as the correct way. While problematisation is often designated as an instance where questions are raised and the interests of actors become deployed (or displaced), it is more of a way to address how connections are made across areas

[25] This is nothing new for post-foundational political philosophers and scientists of radical democracy such as Chantal Mouffe or Ernesto Laclau. They argue that movements of agonism and antagonism lie at the heart of democratic politics; something to which I will return in *chapter 7*.

and spheres such as society, technology and politics and how a variety of possible configurations of actions tame or suppress uncertainties.

"Dingpolitik"

How do different problems relate to each other? How are they interwoven to make sense and become indisputable? Especially when they are inhabited by a range of subjects and made up of all manners of practices? And then, another question, how can we examine these 'partial connections'[26]. What are the ways in which knowing, doing and relating produce truth claims upon an object? Closely following a pragmatist tradition, the whole pragmatist empiricist adventure of ANT[27], and where it considerably distinguishes itself from traditional social constructivist approaches, is not only in its refutation of distinctions between nature or society, big and small or technical and political, but *'the symmetry between the knowing subject and the world to be known'* (Hennion 2016:301). When it comes to the analysis of (public) problems, or sociotechnical controversies, to use one of the expressions popular in ANT circles[28], 'the moderns' (or modern science, if you will) is an amalgam (Latour, 2016). Latour's[29] exercise of thought is particularly telling: the modern world and the references about this world disqualify other possible trajectories. As such, city planning's normative formulation of good city life in the just city is compromised by a 'technological unconsciousness' which generates its own rules, values and norms (Thrift 2004a). A bureaucratic and engineering machinery of urban regulation, which deliberative planning scholars were right to question in the ways planners articulate 'motivating visions' or 'scenarios of possibility' (Healey 2007;

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[26] The formulation refers to a theoretical concept by social anthropologist Marilyn Strathern, in which she starts from the basic assumption that a complex view of things can never make everything visible, but at the same time everything seems to be connected to everything else (Strathern 2005).

[27] Earlier work on scientific rationality was not only ground-breaking for STS, but it also lay the ground for much of the following ANT-work that took place decades later be it in the form of material semiotics or valuation studies.

[28] For early ANT studies, science was not something given but constantly the object of experiments and forces of trial. Science is an outcome, not a cause.

[29] However, if we follow ANT scholars' line of argumentation, science receives its credibility because a compilation of mechanisms is efficiently based on hard facts. In this sense, it requires a number of elements as much as particular places and times to be accredited with the fate of a claim, a strong rhetoric that receives the status of knowledge (Latour & Woolgar 1987: 179). In other words, facts rely on resources that are to be found in the networks that sustain them (ibid. 180).

Hillier 2007). While deliberative planning scholarship urges planners to act as communicative intermediaries, I somewhat follow Ash Amin's observation here that an inquiry into what he calls 'programmatic urbanism' offers *"clarity on the values and expectations of the city that works for the benefit of all its citizens (human and non-human), as it does on the ethical orientations of such an urbanism, explaining how the proposals address contemporary global hazard and risk (in all its varieties) and contemporary social transformation (in all its dimensions)"* (Amin 2011:639).

To question the multiple circumstances of modernist vision and bureaucratic mechanisms in which urban good life is reassembled could be a way out of the impasse as drawn by Amin. I suggest a little detour here to make this more clear: Matthew Hull takes us to Islamabad, Pakistan (Hull 2012). One of the problems is the expropriation of land. At first, the struggle between the officials and villagers seems to be straightforward. It turns out that the conflict becomes much more complicated as the villagers resist the expropriation process by occupying land. The process is taken to court and fails. Against all odds, the villagers win their claim and Hull shows how schemes, statistics, categories and other bureaucratic artefacts forming new references and collectives around a displacement of what is identified as problematic or right. Even if the role of planners could be reframed to develop an alternative and communicative approach, these practices remain entangled in principles of regulatory obligation, measuring objects and legal accountability.

This study displays all the facets of an ANT problematisation. There are uncertainties, passages, specificities, counter-framings, re-arrangements and hybrid collectives/objects. In addition it shows how the shift from a deliberative account of knowledge practices to an pragmatist-inspired ANT approach uncovers the various entangled dimensions of urban expertise and experience.

Bearing this in mind, two things are important. First, *how problems are ordered or networked in relation to objects that co-articulate them*. Madeleine Akrich hints at this in her seminal work on scripts (Akrich 1992); how semiotic technologies mediate. John Law and Vicky Singleton also show how different logics reconfigure themselves around objects (Law and Singleton 2005). The second point is: *how do objects themselves become references invoking the reliability of practices to address overlapping realities?*

This raises the general question of the *thingness* and *precarity* by, in, and through which problems become more or less meaningful, objective, natural and public. In both respects, ANT

has crafted interesting proposals for studying the mundane iteration of material objects and scientific facts. I pick Latour's 'parliament of things' (Latour 2007:814–815) here as it helps illustrate my point more forcefully in relation to the collective constitution of public action.

> *«[T]he key move is to make all definitions of politics turn around the issues instead of having the issues enter into a ready-made political sphere to be dealt with. First define how things turn the public into a problem, and only then try to render more precise what is political, which procedures should be put into place, how the various assemblies can reach closure, and so on. Such is the hard-headed Dingpolitik of STS as opposed to the human-centred Realpolitik.»*
>
> *—Bruno Latour, 2007*

The point of *Dingpolitik* is to describe how objects, or let's say things, are at the centre of political conflicts, debates and compromises. While this object-oriented perspective presents no radically new argument in this regard, it is a forceful example of the constructed, political and complex nature of objectivity, categories, representations and facts. This is an important point: the social construction of a problem is different from the co-constitution of action as in response to problematic situations. Essential for understanding the status of truth are the problems behind the celebration of modern experience, which is a result of simplification processes rendered formidable through generalised tools. These, in turn, not only determine general forms of legitimate knowledge but also define good and false problems. Latour's central point, though, does not rest on the tiny settings of fact production but he actually invites us to think how the 'rest of the humanity', all those outside the circuits of scientific knowledge production, deal with 'reality'? Seen this way, knowledge is not enough. We need to inquire how facts are being purified inside and outside these centres and circuits of knowledge production; a question I will return to later regarding how science is entering democracy (Latour 2003, 2004a). Namely, how come certain claims become indisputable and not accused outside of their scientific network.

Relevant to my argument here is how ANT, in its emancipation from the study of scientific reason, engages empirically with knowledge formation in various political trajectories. Thereby, it is notable how ANT unfolds a critique towards the field of political science accusing it of externalizing the question of knowledge from the question of democracy. In contrast, Callon, Latour and later on Marres would approach processes of knowledge formation and distribution as entangled within political implications. As an example, democracy is not an universal ideal but an arrangement of models, terminologies and policies.

A problem-centred inquiry of democratic politics allows for a more situated and contemporary examination of complex public affairs. The important role allotted to objects and problems of

politics is interestingly exemplified by Andrew Barry in his ethnography of pipelines whereby he develops the notion of 'material politics' to discuss how objects impact politics through itinerant practices, relational interferences and situated demonstrations. Interesting here, is also how Barry positions his argumentation in contrast to post-foundational theories that concentrate on agonistic dissent; a topic also widely anchored in planning theory (see chapter 7). Barry instead directs attention to the socio-political life of materials, settings and objects which come to populate, animate and problematise public interests, values, contexts and disagreements. I draw this observation in particular from Andrew Barry's work on 'material politics' who asks how certain objects are integral to the agreements and disputes of political life and knowledge (Barry 2013).

More recently, Barry wrote an article on how environmental problems are articulated as objects of concern (Barry 2020). Exposing how problems are not just issues that raise publics but also events that produce 'multiple vectors of contestation' (ibid.:9). Important to Barry's account and the example he gives about the problem of the environmental impact of GMOs is the range of unpredictable and contestable possibilities emerging from its singularity that are not per se characterised by the particular characteristics of GMOs but by the nexus of related issues recombining the problem of GMOs and their environmental impact. This is an observation which interestingly resonates with Manuel Tironi's reflection on the ability of technical strategies to spark issues (Tironi 2015). A point he makes in contradiction to Fischer who claims that experts need to find ways to relate their technical practices to public discourses. Tironi shows how politicised strategies are not possible if only anti-technological. There is too much of an ontological (and epistemological) difference between expertise and non-expertise. Technocrats rely on instrumental knowledge, codes, plans and arenas as means to reduce political struggles. For Tironi then, and likewise Barry, re-politicisation is not about minimising the technical, or technocracy, but to understand how the technical is problematised and deployed in public action, which will be the subject of the next section.

3.3 On the co-constitution of planning problems and public action

The last section discusses three versions of public action that have become entangled and indisputable for planning. At this point, it is crucial to specify how an inquiry into the problematisation of planning practices is concerned with relational composition. The previous section aimed at describing how uncertain situations that are the source of some kind of concern

are defined or bounded. This is the starting point for this section which continues to ask how joint problems turn into public action. We will see how planning co-constitutes three distinct versions of public action that are either justified by the bureaucratic gaze on rules and values, or, by the differentiation of these practices that have become more or less public to the extent of justifying, mediating, demonstrating or experimenting their civic and participatory relevance in non-institutional circuits of knowing-practice.

Public administration

Planning has been relevant to carry out the commitments of the central government, i.e. the State. Local authorities have played a considerable role in the physical and strategic planning of services and infrastructure ranging from local economic development to housing welfare states. City planning is part of a bureaucratic machinery where rules and regulations dominate, identify and ensure administrative processes. These in turn sustain the bureaucratic organisation and development for local politics, which is founded on an '*hierarchical sectorialism'* (Healey 1998). In this regard, public action defines itself by command and control; in consequence, the role of planning is to spatially execute the 'rule' of bureaucracy.

The bureaucratic gaze is still a valid condition for contemporary planning. As Salet (2018:20) has shown lately, planning not only accentuates bureaucratic domination but it treats and recognises the political character of decision-making through instrumental and normative rationality. The ascendance and rational organisation of bureaucracy is closely linked and deeply embedded with modern societies. For Weber (1978:18), who goes even further, democracy is partially subject to the 'rule' of bureaucracy. Local governments follow the logics and dynamics of being administered; bureaucratisation and rationalisation come in a pair to form legitimacy based on rule and expertise. Noteworthy in Weber's account is how close his conception of bureaucracy comes to characterise how written documents stabilise the normative effects of bureaucratic ruling (see also Mitchell 2002).

At the level of cities, bureaucracy turned into a form and perspective on urban managerialism (Williams 1978). In contrast to the civil service at the national level, local governments and municipalities were characterised by their implementation of schemes and policies. Executed by local officials at the municipal level, planning was a form of public action that was foremost responsible for the allocation of land resources. Ray Pahl's (1975) book *Whose City* provides an interesting glimpse in to the relative importance of local administrations and the separate

treatment of specialised expertise and local politics. Problems were specific to each professional realm and expertise. The practical knowledge of planning was formalised by allegiances with standards and professional associations. The autonomy of planning was double. For one, its legitimacy came from the institutional capacity. Secondly, legitimacy came from professional identity and was largely separated from urban-political decision-making.

In this sense, planning relies on technical knowledge to make decisions but it is foremost the rational bureaucratic organisation as a 'rule-following culture of public service' that enables planning with an effective responsiveness because it is a model built on the presumption of agreement (Healey 1998). The share of the power in bureaucratic organisations is required for remedying the problem. The problem exists within the boundary of the organisation and is based on a pre-defined problem-solving-model where consensus reigns. According to Crosby and Bryson (2005), problems of public action follow a rational model and are securely fixed in the realm of government responsibility (ibid.:15)

> *«The assumption is that once the actions are taken, programs and policies will be implemented, the goals will be achieved, and the problem solved.»*
>
> *—Crosby and Bryson, 2005*

With consensus over programs, policies and goals set the definition and cause of problems; hence problems are contained in an area of the public sector and specified by technocratic functions.

Public justifications

The structure of public action and the organisational patterns of bureaucracies have become more or less differentiated. Something Clegg (1990) has come to name as the relatively unproblematic management of post-modernity or to put it in Lash's terms the de-differentiation of modern management. With the decline of modernism in practice, 'public knowledge and action have fused the constitutive work involved in institutional organisations. In the growing devaluation of formalisms, city planning is being juxtaposed with a new 'regime of signification.' In occurrence, public action requires both organised signs and signs of organisation as for instance the significative sensation and interpretation of governance as a phenomenon and organisation of signifying politics (Pinson 2009). This again comes close to an inversion of Weber's view of bureaucracy which is regarded not only as scientifically ingenuine but a monstrous machine of rational calculation (see also Gay 2000). In a

differentiated society, significations of humanity, that is the relations between rules and values, are not devoured by passionless bureaucracy but re-signified into other means and meanings of public action. Differentiation, according to Lash (1999), proposes a departure from foundationalism and rationalisation and is replaced by new organisation imperatives and categories.

Collaborative forms replace 'command and control'. As Patsy Healey (1997) has demonstrated, over the years, there's been much debate and a rise of informal networks that have led to the building up of more-than-institutional forms of policy development including stakeholders and 'relational' resources. These new patterns of institutional logics not only reshape the formulation of public problems but also constitute the desirability of outcomes through conceptions of the common good (see previous chapter). For instance problems of congestion or sprawl are not anymore the object of administrative politics but resonate with cultural images, natural troubles and different senses of worth. A similar observation has been made by Graham and Marvin who show how the collapse of the comprehensive ideal in urban planning has led to new 'structures of feeling' (Graham and Marvin 2001:123). Interrelated social and cultural shifts have contested the very notion of a single but highly specified public action where planning offers an integrative view to develop the networked city with its single public realm.

In sharp contrast, public action is then inscribed in what Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) address as ethical pluralism or the plurality of justification logics. The institutional legitimacy of public action is contested due to plural orders of worth whereby the notion of polity and formats play a crucial role. Common good is thus not a universal moral principle but an imperative according to which agreements are reached. If we take this approach for our understanding of emergent problems in planning we may think of judgements as based on acts of justification, whereby justification shapes the way a public problem aspires toward justice and the common good, and thus make it possible to build and govern a 'harmonious polity'. Emergent problems are not contained through institutional capacities but according to officially scripted forms or various formats of commonality.

Public experimentations

Callon et al's essay *Acting in an uncertain world* proposes the notion of dialogic democracy to make a difference with the models of democracy that we know as traditional and representative.

This notion is central to understanding how expertise is put to debate through various modes of application and procedures. Henceforth, knowledge formations become the object of multiple problematizations with the state of the world having changed drastically. Science is not anymore isolated and scientific representations are not sufficient to ensure secluded science and research; a point that Callon et al work has in common with Latour's *Politics of Nature*. Democracy is procedural. An argument Marres has somehow tried to unsettle (Marres 2005b). This reincarnation of ANT which questions the conception of democracy is derivative. Rather than as 'procedure', democracy could, like science, be accounted for as 'method'; i.e. for a problematization as an operation on empirical relations.

The 'entrance' of science and technology into democratic processes is a story mainly told through the lens of uncertainty, or how knowledge gets out of the hand of scientists because public claims and political debates overlap with sound forms of knowledge production.

One of the central contributions of ANT-inspired works on understandings of democracy is how everyday entanglements may, or may not, enable public engagement and turn citizens into concerned collectives: locations like architecture competitions (Strebel and Silberberger 2017), design studios (Farías and Wilkie 2015), planning exhibitions (Kurath and Paulos 2019) or DIY workshops (Criado and Otárola 2016) can become heated and engaging spaces of shared or contested public involvement. This idea of democracy as 'heterogenous assembly' has not gone unnoticed and abstract concepts such as 'forum' and 'parliament' have received criticism for not being empirical enough (Madden 2010; Metzger 2016). Farías (2016) has discussed this matter as a tension between concept and device. He reviews how the notion of the 'hybrid forum' has been partially repurposed by a consultancy firm to co-opt citizens in Chile's post-tsunami reconstruction of coast line cities. Speaking of *problematic deployments*, Farías describes how 'hybrid forums' failed to ensure the democratization of expert urban intervention not only because the organization of participatory spaces are far less experimental than expected but also because uncertainty becomes a mechanism for consensus-building rather than remaining a register of articulation.

This framework of inquiry suggests several things. First, planning knowledge which is effective in professional contexts may be fabricated in diverse ways, aligning local concerns to insinuate particular responses to political, organisational and economic imperatives. Second, some of the typical problematisations emerge, which tend to be oriented towards rule relations or experimental value-creations but which are nevertheless part of broader urban and political assemblages in which the organisation of participatory space makes only limited difference.

This might better be described by Pestre's invocation to rethink the multiple forms of government and the particular kinds of ontological deployments in the inherently problematic formations and situations of public action (Pestre 2013). The formation of public action is then indicative of a particular type of (ontological) 'trouble'[30] which has become constitutive of technical, political and moral modes of problem-solving. Characterized by a proliferation of public and material entanglements, planning experiences a re-articulation of its habitual ways and is now expected to consist of shared vocabularies, locations and routines to collectively solve problems and images of common public problems. What counts here, is not only the different conception of problems in planning, away from utility mechanisms to democratic claims, but how symmetries get established between various modes of problematization: Not only how planning performs as governmental knowledge or spatial technique but how it gets articulated into various modes of good public action. Callon et al formulate this displacement as a delegation in two simultaneous moves, entailing reduction and separation of knowledge and responsibility:

> *«The symmetry of the procedures on which delegative democracy rests will not have escaped the reader: two massive reductions, two exclusive delegations, and two sharp breaks. The first separates specialists and laypersons; the second carves out the gap between professional politicians and ordinary citizens. The two breaks produce two populations that previously did not exist.»*
>
> *—Callon & al., 2009*

As mentioned earlier, planning is proposed as a de-politicised mode of governing to reduce democratic deficits. However, if we follow this line of reasoning, deficits are not central to the existence of problems but the problematic lies within the distribution of the political, of the good.

> *«In fact it is the very movement of delegation—whether that by which laypersons leave the production of knowledge to specialists, or that by which ordinary citizens entrust their representatives with the task of composing the collective in their name—that leads to the existence of both the layperson and the ordinary citizen, and with them, as their corollaries, both ''the'' specialist and ''the'' representative.»*
>
> *—Callon & al., 2009*

The assumption here is that the symmetry depends on compositional matters, whereby concerned parties arrive at collective definitions through the identities and possibilities of actors involved. The question for us then becomes how delegation gets achieved, if not through

[30] Problematic situations foreground kinds of 'ontological trouble' that deploy various articulations of something that matters. (Marres 2012; Woolgar 2005)

depoliticization. Callon and colleagues ask how a heterogenous range of actors (politicians, experts, technicians, laypersons etc.) consider themselves involved. The answer to this is hybrid formations; these not only to designate the heterogeneity of actors but the different levels, domains and modes of relevance at which questions are addressed and problems get constituted.

Problematic deployments and the politics of shared expertise

The previous section aimed to show how public action occurs at various conjectures, transiting from a bureaucratic machinery to various justification logics, up to experimentation with uncertainty as a counter-framing governmental mechanism. This last expression of public action as an articulation of various matters of concern shows how city planning is now situated at various intersections, and co-constitutes different modes of public action when it comes to specifically problematize, perform and capture the emphasis and specificity of good city life. In short, knowledge and action, rules and values, means and ends are the object of multiple problematizations; the politics of planning now aim to translate and prescribe technical knowledge to other worlds as shown by Guggenheim (2017). Yet while problematizing-paths become more and more entangled or corrupt, and therefore less stable, most planning technologies and categorizations such as the master plan or the zoning code remain operational in order to order and/or control urban society and change. The material achievements of another epoch operate as simplified interfaces, or black boxes as Guggenheim calls them in reference to Latour's concept. It is exactly here where this present dissertation aims to empirically examine a point already thoughtfully made by Rittlel and Weber (1973) on the multiple interdependencies of problems and the array of unforeseen deployments that arise, activate and constitute modes of public action.

Citizen science, policy-evidence, sustainable development and other contemporary figures of democratic urban governance enter and partially re– or counter-frame the very practices of planning. Given that such reorientations play on the imaginary of a perfect society, urban order and good publics, public action today operates beyond 'machinic assemblages' and standard categorizations of the city. Notably, city planning has moved away from producing general claims to universality, at least partially, and since the city constitutes a privileged site for political struggle, as many authors and researchers have demonstrated, in particular deliberative policy scholars, planning problems bring forth what Deleuze and Guattari have

referred to as ‘collective arrangements of enunciation’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). A notion which designates not only imaginaries as unconscious formations in relation to emerging vocabularies, semiotics etc. but which enables the deployment of new articulations of what is problematic and what is not. To put it simply, the problematic becomes a generative force that impregnates, diffracts and reweaves planning practices and expertise.

This is an important aspect for the analysis of city planning and the co-constitution of public action, since endorsing such a protocol aims to unveil the ‘*overflow of unforeseeable effects*’ that change the direction and constellation of assemblages (Blok and Farías 2016; Born and Barry 2018; Hennion 2017). The distinction between co-constitution, between intermediary and mediator is thus important to understand the articulation of city problematisations and the rise of shared expertise. Introducing a displacement in the valence or position, **mediators** “transform, translate, distort, and modify the meaning or the elements they are supposed to carry” (Latour 2005, 37). In contrast, intermediaries connect cause and effect seamlessly (Bowker 2013; Disch 2010). In terms of co-constitution, planning mediates a new sense of public action through problematic deployments that change the purpose of both what it means to plan and how this is a mode of public action.

In the next chapter, I will describe how an inquiry into situations is a particularly telling gesture to capture how problematizations run through, form and compose the entities and activities considered to populate a planning expert’s world that pursues good city life, and to redefine what counts as public action in a common world.

CHAPTER 4.

THE SITUATIONS OF URBAN INQUIRY

> *What is required is a form of analysis oriented not by a concern with how to define 'the urban', but rather by an interest in understanding how and why making sense of urban issues becomes salient in the first place.*
>
> *—Barnett and Bridge 2016*

In the previous chapter we have come to see how planning problems are co-constitutive, that is how various figurations of the public are implicit to, or fabricated through, the problems that shape and constitute the normativity of being right and doing good planning. Putting planning to the test of problematisation and endorsing an analytical position that problematises also means that one needs to identify the situations through which problems become force-fields and get reassembled. In line with the conceptual reflections staging a discussion between Dewey, Foucault and Callon, I will, in this chapter, explain how I devised a pragmatist research protocol by drawing on ANT's commitment to a fierce empiricism. Rehearsing various heuristic devices and analytical manoeuvres, I will explain how a pragmatist inquiry drawing on ANT needs to engage situations and problematisations in order to understand how the urban question seeks to establish good urban life as the only response and remedy to solve highly contested urban phenomena and contemporary challenges.

4.1 Empty offices, which meetings ?

> *Day 3 of the second week of doing ethnographic fieldwork in Vienna. While 'routinely' entering the planning offices, I've come to find the two-desk room with my allocated place to be empty. Only separated by a door, I go to the annexed room only to find this one empty too [Figure 3]. At the end of the annexed room one can find the conference room. Luckily the door is open and I do not need to feel afraid that a spontaneous team meeting is happening: the room is vacant. The same is true for the cartography office. While I do not check with the office's entry desk, where there are usually two secretaries handling non-technical paper work, I decide to go downstairs and check out Vienna's office for public map consultation. Whenever there is a public release or participatory process, citizens are allowed to come in and check the elaborated zoning elaborations and contest the redevelopment project. The room also works as an archive and the service is offered by two cartographers that are usually attached to an office. On this day the room is closed too and I found out that it is only open on specific days. It was not unusual to regularly find empty desks. Planners seemed to be busy with tasks other than desk work. On that day, however, I hadn't met anyone in the staircase and all the corridors I'd passed by were empty too, which caused me to check if this was a national holiday – it was not. As I found out later, the department was at a half-day vocational training and since I had no access to the internal mailing list, I was left uninformed. I used the day to check out two other municipal departments that are also involved in matters of urban planning –– information I'd retrieved from an analysis of documents.*

The moment I started this research and understood the lack of a clearly defined site to study planning problems I began to draw my attention to account for the multiplicity and indefiniteness of city planning as a mode of public action. To trace planners is one thing; to situate or locate planning is a whole other endeavour. Let me explain. Following planners across the bureaucratic jungle of public institutions can be informative in a number of ways. Colleagues like Jenny Lindblad and Pim Peters have shown how an ethnography of municipal planners indicates the flexible interpretation of contexts or the planning of parts without overview (Lindblad 2020a; Peters 2019). Against the more general assessments that planning lacks a specific object, both accurately describe how planning objects constitute associations with other realities, either justified by an abidance to bureaucratic processes or contextual pressures. To be good and exert right planning is then co-dependent on the fabrication of facts that withhold a position which is objective in a bound setting. But, what to do if the setting is not bound anymore; or if a multitude of overflows reframe the very practice at hand from one site to another. Or even, as seen in the vignette, if planners are not in their offices anymore and instead are meeting, consulting and exchanging with politicians, architects or citizens.

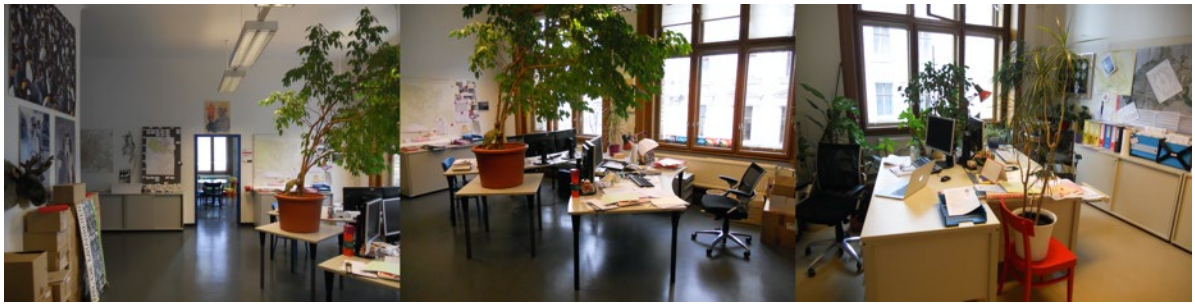

Figure 3 Sequence of empty office spaces in a planning department © Julio Paulos

A key moment during my fieldwork was when I stopped thinking of planning as embedded in one particular institutional or urban context. Instead of re-enacting contexts, institutions and/or spaces, I started to account for planning as the ambition to plan for the emergence of shared problematizations. From this viewpoint, there is no such thing as an isolated institution, planner or fact. Delving deeper into the theme and discussions about matters of concern led me to successively take out planning expertise from broader appreciations of technocratic and modernist categories such as top-down engineering solely defined by forces of development or rules of law. Instead, I became interested in how planners form emerging 'mechanisms of entanglement' where established and stable knowledge practices coincide, articulate or complement novel problematizations without reifying existing patterns. Faced with this semantic and material proliferation and the resulting hybridization between rules and values, my main purpose was to understand how the characterization and objectification of city planning implies a specific collaborative work and continuous investment in 'processes of shared qualification' (Callon, Méadel, and Rabeharisoa 2002). One of the visible manifestations of shared concerns is the formulation of municipal urban agendas as human-centred and collective device; reflected as well in the upsurge in public debate and the preoccupation of planners and politicians with clarifying the questions of urban development.

This chapter is about the entanglements of practices by which urban concerns have become a question for me to explore. This analytical focus on shared problematizations understands practices as situational responses that cannot be added up to a whole but are endowed with shared capacities that remain partially connected to each other (Callon 2007; Farías 2011). The aim is to present the analytical manoeuvres underlying the field-research process, and that shaped my road in tracing city planning as an achievement of the good. To draw out these

shared problems and concerns, I was forced to think of my fieldwork as a 'force-field' composed of constantly evolving urban assemblages (Amin and Thrift 2002; Farías 2010).

> *«The notion of urban assemblages in the plural form offers a powerful foundation to grasp the city anew, as an object which is relentlessly being assembled at concrete sites of urban practice or, to put it differently, as a multiplicity of processes of becoming, affixing sociotechnical networks, hybrid collectives and alternative topologies.»*
>
> *— Ignacio Farías, 2009*

However, what does it mean to account for shared problematisations? How to observe configurational relations? Where does one go to study planning if it is indefinite and takes place in many places or *"in a net of fragmented, multiple contexts, through multitudes of kaleidoscopic movements"* (Czarniawska 2007). As Czarniawska has reminded us, fieldwork on the move requires the researcher to adapt and adopt various techniques and attitudes. Instead of 'only describing', I had to devise an 'assemblage method-in-practice' to 'cover up traces', to fill in the blanks with quick glimpses and by piecing together different sets of information. Following Law (2004: 41), an ethnography of different sites amounts to an 'assemblage method'[31] in which the empirical is actively constituted out of additions and relations between bodies, objects, practices and words.

In light of this reasoning, two things require further explanation when sticking with the notion urban assemblages as a methodological and reflective entry-point: (1) how is *multiplicity* done and (2) what does *ontology* do?[32] Both of these aspects connect to what Annemarie Mol has come to prominently label *'empirical philosophy'* or to borrow Stengers' words '*radical empiricism*'. Latour would at some point label it '*second empiricism*'. The fierce and relational empiricism required to describe situated empirical inquiry is more important here than its denomination. Attentive to the things and relations that constitute its objects of study, this empiricism casts empirical inquiry as a worlding practice.

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[31] Assemblage is a conceptual language dating back to Deleuze and Guattari's work; assemblage involves the 'co-functioning of ontologically heterogeneous terms, such as materials, technological artefacts, bodies, texts, concepts and symbols' (Farías 2016a:41).

[32] Cf. *chapter 3* on the definition of these analytical concepts.

To *empiricise* planning emphasizes its practices in relation to collective concerns and draws attention to how political questions are performed in 'political situations'[33] as part of 'the collective'. This is a good point to unpack the above vignette which can be read in two ways: as a retrospective realization, hence an 'end-product' of the research project or as a *Jamesian* moment where I replace the question of 'what do planners know?' with the question 'what does planning entitle or allow planners to know, and what does it not'? The above vignette not only shows the moment when I started to leave the planning offices to trace planning in action but it also exposes other elements that are not directly experienced in the bureaucratic confines of everyday planning practices. Without excluding direct experiences and everyday situations, my research aimed to think through and by the milieu.

Here I could have told another story; one where I disclose a synthetic description of the research project as a starting point. This formal story would have gone like this: The thesis at hand draws on ethnographic data collected in the framework of the research project 'Rethinking Zones'. I have followed planners in their daily routines. Funded by the SNSF[34], with another doctoral colleague I separately conducted fieldwork in five different municipalities. Via participant observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis, we analysed the practices and arenas of zone-based planning in order to explore the overlapping networks that perform land-use regulations. Interested in how locally specific assemblages of territorial policy making intersect with 'traveling concepts'[35], we identified several planning cultures[36]. This synthetic description might account for the conceptual presumptions and the ways we collected data, but itself is not so revealing about the various techniques I needed to calibrate as in order to acknowledge the refracted combinations of problems encountered. Following the renewed interest in the 'politics of method' in some social sciences, in particular STS-inspired anthropology and ANT (Estalella and Sánchez Criado 2018; Lury and Wakeford 2012; Marres,

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[33] According to Andrew Barry (2002, 2012), 'political situations' allow for the deliberation of strategies to a certain degree with claims remaining contestable to audiences.

[34] Swiss National Science Foundation (Project Nr. 146516 led by PI's PD Dr. Monika Kurath and Prof. Jean Ruegg)

[35] Travelling concepts is different from the literature on policy mobility. The concept is drawn from Michael Guggenheim and Ola Söderström's work on the (Guggenheim and Söderström 2010)

[36] In contrast to traditional planning literature, *planning culture* is not used as an overarching term for diverse planning approaches but refers to an analytical concept derived from comparative approaches of culture in STS such as epistemic and political culture (Kurath et al. 2015).

Guggenheim, and Wilkie 2018), I am going to expose how various analytical manoeuvres helped me to explore the specific, situated and entangled problem-formations otherwise left unattended.

4.2 Manoeuvring across city municipalities

While doing ethnography, gaining access to the field is an intriguing moment. It is decisive and reveals a lot about what is at stake. Working on three cases had me go through this procedure three times. Respect, accountability and pressure were all factors either playing in my favour or taken as implicit or explicit reasons for not providing access. To be fair, all three municipalities were willing to cooperate: for it being a research project funded by a research organisation, for questions of status by the affiliation I've held with a prominent architectural higher education institution at the time or for the simple fact that middle men opened gates and had contacts within the public institutions in question. Nonetheless, even if all three public institutions partially gave their consent in the end, access was not that straightforward. Having a desk in the respective offices and following planners was critical for at least three reasons. First, due to the lack of clarity regarding my status and direct contribution, each institution was reluctant to have me there on a permanent basis. Second, due to the lack of personal resources and past experiences with such a situation where someone intrudes their sector, the institutions did not know whom to delegate the responsibility of taking me in charge and how to accommodate the research with ongoing projects. Third, due to the opaque procedures and long-term processes those in charge feared I would disclose or judge by singularising specific moments constitutive of complex procedures.

At the outset, to get a better grasp of the issues co-constituting the general and the underlying conditions, I assumed that a conceptual 'flattening' of the fields would be the best strategy (see also Latour 2005). Bringing into my analysis the agency of municipal agendas, exhibitions, inaugurations, rankings, vocabularies and other instruments of public action would help me understand how the world of planning is held in place to sustain its very existence. The emergence of new sites and settings where planning was made relevant, valuable and visible to the public eye is not only an extension of technicity into extra-institutional realms or, as some have argued, a mere differentiation of politics. Instead, it produces new path-dependencies of what is considered technical, political and good (Rip 2013); something I could not have addressed or observed with a mere focus on organisations, epistemologies, materiality

or practices. A pragmatist-empiricist approach assumed that what planners, technicians and officials said about planning is only a part of what planning does. An understanding of the political, economic, social and mediatic landscape revealed itself as part of the ethnographic exercise. This conceptual position that underlies my research experiences and position sees everything as enfolded within itself; however devising such heuristics does not mean that everything is analytically flattened. Far from it. Rather, it asks how planning stands by its own right as a self-sufficient practice that has overtaken new settings of knowledge- and value-production.

During field investigations, I observed how 'the outside' more often played a role than the inside. Mechanisms, procedures, rules or decisions of public action being taken or suspended on behalf of people, values, expectations and other exterior expressions etc. Thinking fieldwork through those expressions not only raised questions on path-dependencies between good knowledge and just action but also with regards to my own position as a researcher. If planning and public action are so entangled, where do we start or end when analysing these ramifications and how are we to deal with what lies supposedly outside of, and, what is inside institutional planning work? As discussed by Paul Rabinow or Annelise Riles, these are familiar problems encountered by most ethnographers (Rabinow 1996; Riles 2001). More than only of methodological nature, these issues have been rehearsed through long debates within the field of anthropology as the stranger who goes native and becomes so familiar with the subject matter that s/he knows how to appreciate the deployments of categories and action as her or his own. The work done by bringing planning into my empiricist views is different from such accounts as it does not debate ethnographic techniques through descriptions of situations by reflecting my a-priori standpoints with revelations from the field that continuously shaped and formed the outcomes of the research process. It was not that I suddenly became an insider but the outside on and against which to work is simply missing because it was constantly present. Working with ethnographic devices that presume an outside was thus not a viable option.

Going inside the planning department represented a pragmatist move that makes no relative distinction between inside and outside, meaning and matter, global and local, or content and context. My inquiry did not anticipate these observations as most studies on the multiple faces of planning presume (see also Palermo and Ponzini 2010). What renders the study of planning as public action new is not so much the missing object of planning but the discovery of reassembled settings, issues, experimentations and vocabularies that inescapably rearticulate the divides between experts and non-experts, rules and values, means and ends. This continual

redeployment between the *in*– and *outside* brought some analytical challenges as in how to recognise (contentious) situations that over time have become absorbed, taking on the status of an institutional 'norm' governed by its own laws and rites of passage.

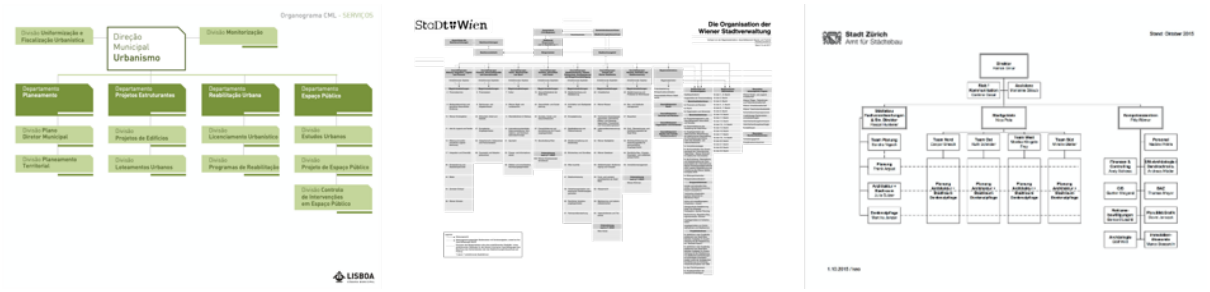

Figure 4 Three organigrams situating institutional planning © CML (l) Stadt Wien (m) Stadt Zürich, AfS (r)

The other reason to go inside was to unlearn my own analytical categories and probe the planning literature against the knowledge practices encountered in the field; not beginning with my own categories but starting with categories from the discipline of planning theory and how these emulate or fail to emulate institutional work. The idea behind this was the following. In order to get acclimated to the field, I needed to familiarise myself with literature of planning in order to understand how planning works. Recent rethinking in planning theory has noted the ways in which materiality often shapes the outcome, courses and implications of decisions (Rydin 2014). For example, Beauregard and Lieto (2016) discuss how planning action is sustained by constant references to models and plans. Such an approach is a benevolent attempt to cover existing blind spots in the planning literature, forgetting about modes and materials of ordering practice and discussing the mutual shaping of meaning through matter. With objects playing a marginal role for years in planning theory, this observation seems ground-breaking. To a certain extent, I follow and forefront those issues in my own analysis of the relative efficacy of agendas and reports to change the capacity for action. However, my aim is not to move the analysis of planning practices to another level, scale or subject matter; an effect which occurs too often in ongoing debates in the field of planning theory when moving the analysis to another perspective, scale or morality. This pragmatist demarcation is an important one

because it emphasizes the way in which situations are an effect of the ways we order knowledge and express values, an effect of our own categories and imaginations.

Rethinking my analytical manoeuvres that followed the conceptual flattening of institutional planning work [Figure 4], I was primarily concerned with rendering accessible what planners know by inverting the relationship between how knowledge is put into practice and, instead, investigating how practices co-exist to make sense of the world that we inhabit. By means of this double manoeuvre I tried to take part in the world of planners and the politics of planning. Much in line with Mol's understanding of the ways politics have to do with the way in which problems are framed and pulled into one shape or another. This made me shift sites and move around and outside municipal institutions attending meetings, conferences, roundtables or inaugurations etc.

4.3 *Multi-site-ing* a practice

My task in the research project was initially to track how the zoning code as a non-human actant shapes the boundaries of planning in Lisbon, Vienna and Zurich. One challenge was to locate the agency of the zoning code during rezoning applications which the project took as being part of an 'epistemic culture'. With this in mind, I started my first field study in Vienna. I immediately realized that the zoning code is hard to 'locate' even in specific rezoning procedures either because these procedures were deeply embedded in redevelopment processes or because they were just missing in certain parts of the planning process and allocated to a specific technician who would issue construction permits and draw perimeters during the imprint phase. Rezoning was less connected to a code than to practices of negotiation and reframing of land-plots. These negotiations were always part of larger urban development projects or at least connected to strategies which were the object of municipal agendas, political campaigns or capital investments. The zoning code did not play a prominent role in the Viennese context as a techno-legal device. Contrary to Zurich, where the city is not only categorized into a collection of zones but where zones are the entry-point to thinking about and approaching the city. Rather than a miniature parcel, the zone in Zurich is the central category. At the time, when conducting fieldwork in Vienna and based on the preliminary but indirect experience I had from studying the zoning code in Zurich, I started noticing how the transformation of a range of sites plays a role without planners or other practitioners spending much time rethinking its roles: territory, landscape, place, region, location, zones, blocks,

avenues, sidewalks etc. These were notions loaded with epistemic, historical or political valence but rarely questioned beyond their physical appearance and existence.

Coupled with this observation, I started questioning how to make a comparison between my cases. Since the research project was intended as a comparative analysis, I found myself trapped between choosing an initial viewpoint and, more importantly, I found myself reluctant to make any kinds of connection between cases that would measure basic units such as places or plots with different conceptual meanings[37]. Now, it has been pointed out by various authors that *"we are all comparatists"* (Stengers 2011). To put something in relation, to relativize something, is inherent to the ways we deal with critical problems. One way out would have been to frame the study in its European context. Another option could have been to align the three cities through their aspiration to become 'world cities' connected by mobile policy expertise and socio-technical imaginaries. I resisted those moves. Staying put and not dealing with comparison as if from the outside – as if it were an epistemological, contextual or cultural problem meant I had to make comparison an event (rather than a methodological move). To make comparison an event, in a *Stengerian* sense, is to understand how planners, practitioners and experts lend themselves to measure and rationalize sites as entities of objective urban analysis. How physical sites are translated into panoramas or miniatures (i.e. plans, programs, scale models, agendas etc.) of being right about urban phenomena and doing good planning.

When following planning practices it is rare to encounter a site as simply '*out there'*. A few exceptions are field visits and excursions but even then, those sites are not static. Yet, a great deal of planning work is to capture and conceptualize space into entities that make them more amenable to define strategies or policies. Zooming into these specific situations where planners were placing, translating and accounting for the built environment was revealing in a number of ways (Yaneva 2005). One could see how sites came to matter by working with certain tools and according to certain concepts. The multiple agency of sites in planning placed me, as a pragmatist-empiricist ethnographer, in a difficult situation where I needed to recalibrate between the urban planners' work of *sit-ing* and my own ethnographic strategy of questioning them in their offices and environments (Yaneva and Mommersteeg 2019). Zooming in meant that I had to constantly map how planners zoom out; how they establish relations between plans

[37] Widely expressed in the field of urban studies, I did not make use of the growing number of voices expressing eagerness to develop new practices of global urban theorizing (McFarlane and Robinson 2012; Robinson and Roy 2016; Roy and Ong 2011).

and strategies and what counts as reference or not. To capture these situations is one challenge, to align or juxtapose them throughout all my ethnographic movements and inquiries was a whole other issue.

This double shift in empirical emphasis —zooming *in* and out— meant I needed to constantly establish what Beaulieu has called 'co-presence' (Beaulieu 2010). Instead of transitioning from one municipality to another, from one city or urban context to another, my inquiry into how static spaces are turned or planned into good outcomes was central to my empiricist-detective journey. Much in line with pragmatist philosopher William James's idea of the pluriverse (James 1975), my inquiry was constantly un-sited and re-sited to understand how planning processes and practices interconnect with the constitution of good urban, infrastructural and built outcomes. In other words, the 'locales-of-practices' of urban planners and experts are not bound to institutions physically, they also vary in setting, that is, urban governance and its highly mobile knowledge practices as part of a 'technological society'[38] have not only reconfigured knowing and doing by amplifying the multifaceted spectrum of planning professions but have also led to a displacement of planning settings: Roundtables, focus-groups, workshops, inaugurations, liveability, rankings etc. rearticulate the specificities, sites and situations of city planning providing novel arrangements and valuations of what it means to do good urbanism.

4.4 Reflection on worlding encounters

While situating planning I did not only shadowed, flattened, un-learned and manoeuvred across sites, municipalities or cities but I also experienced how worlds come into being at the encounter. In anthropology, the encounter is often taken as a narrative figure to explain a moment of confrontation and then possibly a reorientation of the very research process. To act as a figure then frames one's partial knowledge. Defined by Strathern (1999:6) as 'the ethnographic moment' –those situations when researchers juxtapose their own analytical

[38] As Barry (2001) argued new technologies do not impact or create new modes of government. However, they dominate our sense of the kind of problems that governments must address. In my case, city planning as a traditional 'space of government' is not directly influenced by the rise of new technologies, forums or events, but its technical skills and ways of thinking become so to say amenable through the confrontation with technical innovation.

frames with those 'dazzling' them in their fieldwork experience– I tried to accumulate those situations only to find that I was not at all well equipped to handle the continuous search that new relative positions, scenes, sites and settings would bring. How would I account for all those events and networks that partially deal, emphasize or distribute planning work. This is when I started to rethink encountering not as mode of orienting fieldwork but as the possibility to account for sense- and world-making claims. Much in line with Thrift's example about courier companies like FedEx, I started thinking of planning through 'topological complications', that is, its practices of displacement and translocation are not possible without 'technologies of encountering' (Thrift 2005). Thinking with Callon and Law's presence/absence notion (Callon and Law 2004), where relations are simultaneous social and technical effects, my exploration would lead me to question the ways in which encountering (and coordination) work in planning.

Much has already been said about policy mobilities shifting the modes of ordering knowledge acquisition in planning. Cities mobilize other cities etc. But how can we define knowledge circulation in a world of encounters? This was an exercise that took me a while to solve and I could not have done so if it wasn't for Anna Tsing's help, although not in person (Tsing 2011). Tsing demonstrates how 'worlding' emerges from practices and how the job of an ANT-scholar is to point out the special effects that allow viewers to confuse panoramas with reality. Drawing on Latour (2012), a *panorama* is a totalizing view that is limited by the conditions of its projection, but nevertheless conceives the pretension to solve local issues. Noteworthy in Latour's account is how these panoramas are linked and crafted in specific locations turning practices into bigger issues. Taking the example of laboratories, parliaments or courtrooms, Latour shows how different 'modes of existence' and macro-phenomena are woven together to sustain those practices. In this way, when planners speak of cities they form narrow views by making a series of connections with other places and issues; these insights assisted me in rethinking how planners and politicians convey master-narratives, not only as 'big picture' but as heterogeneous associations formulated as a whole.

4.5 When public action emerges as urban question

The purpose of this chapter was to illustrate some of the ethnographic manoeuvres that a fierce empiricism brings. Endorsing a pragmatist protocol to inquire how planning expertise aims to achieve 'the good' put me as a researcher in a position where I needed to follow, flatten,

un/learn and encounter the situations, debates or problems that constitute planning as mode of public action. While the conceptual and heuristic manoeuvres directed my attention to the multifaceted domains of planning and how these frame and counter-frame public action as common good, I was still perplexed by how issues come into focus to the point of determining what it is that planning processes are presumed to be able to do. How do the interpretations of planning rules and values happen? How to diagnose the relation between habitual action and problems? As pointed out by Barnett and Bridge (2016), Dewey's pragmatism can help us out of this impasse. Taking place against the background of what Dewey refers to as 'extensive and enduring situations' (Dewey 2012), problematic situations are moments of explicit attention. They do not exist as in opposition to unproblematic situations allowing us to escape the trap of thinking problematizations are disruptions. In this sense problematizations, as shown in the preceding chapter, are an ordinary feature of the world. In the subsequent empirical chapters I therefore diagnose and analyse how the *problematicness* of situations constitute an 'ordinary' aspect of planning processes, its ambition to achieve good urban life.

The contemporary proliferation of urban concerns not only informs how planners should conduct public work but has broadly reconceptualized contemporary planning thought. The previous sections have shown how I composed a pragmatist empiricism drawing on and slightly devising key ANT insights, assuming that the settings, sites and scenes in which planning occurs is always in a set of relations between situations and problematizations. The urban question in contemporary planning processes therefore emerges along a dual sense of the ordinariness of problematizations: as an everyday dimension in specific situations of acting 'just' according to certain patterns and as a wilful set of problematizations strategically addressing and acknowledging long-standing issues of governing good urban life.

The latter is more straightforward and exposes the *problem responsiveness* as a continued outcome of being and acting in a 'technological society'. One where governing good urban life is dependent on how promises of innovation are integrated or safeguarded into the public sector or as political action which recognizes and addresses democratic deficits or technological imperatives. Contemporary planning processes that might appear to naturally belong together are actually linked into coherence by a series of events and parameters. Framed against the long-standing legacy of high urban modernism, smart technology and responsible innovation seem to have become inherent aspects of planning as a field of specialized action, at least on a programmatic policy level. The pragmatist scope of inquiry devised during my fieldwork took explicit notice of how these novel problematizations free up new possibilities of specifying

planning as public action, and how these specifications aim to address and repair inherited and troubled situations by sustaining the promise of good urban life; an extensive consideration of ethical problematizations such as civic evidence, public dialogue or transparency to the areas of city planning and how these implications open up and generate concerted urban agendas and political campaigns.

The emphasis on everyday/ordinary problematizations of planning as a specialized field does not stand in contrast to an overly coherent view of problematization-as-responsiveness, but it opens up further room for analytical explanations. Problematic situations helped me revise how enduring tensions were presented and expressed in taken-for-granted entanglements between planning practices, vocabularies and values.

As we are about to see in the following empirical chapters, a situational inquiry into these mutely repetitive, thought-imbued and negotiated moments reveals how priorities emerge along with agendas, strategies and imperatives allowing us to see to what degree the dynamism of cities, either as economic, historic, infrastructural or political entities harness the relevance of planning in addressing a range of issues such as sustainable redevelopment, social innovation, public security, etc.

CHAPTER 5.

NORMATIVE PRESCRIPTIONS

In the previous chapters we have seen how planning theory is entangled in a continuous rule/value discussion. Later in this chapter, I will discuss how city form is practiced according to different types and capacities. I will look back at a specific moment in time to make a point on how the relationship between city form and planning strives to produce good outcomes based on a generalisability of urban elements through visual artefacts. This focus on principles not only assumes a causal relationship between means and ends but also characterises the prescriptive with normative theories. It is the idealism that finds expression in what the right form of urban order ought to be that interests me. Paying attention to the normative components, I emphasize how urban form is not just translated into categories that vary according to project but how these categorisations specify and normalise knowledge constellations through a range of circulating and imaging references.

During my fieldwork in Zurich, the city municipality was accused of according too much importance to «design plans»[39] *[Gestaltugsplan]* (hereafter GP), which are too rigid, both in a prescriptive and regulatory manner. At the heart of these fierce accusations was a political debate on city form and structure related to a series of contested urban development projects: *Europaalle*, *Neugasse*, *Zollstr* or *Thurgauerstr* just to name a few projects which were highly contested in the media. The dispute centred on the capacity to qualitatively densify urban space. Taking various dimensions, the discussion on urban density and 'compact sprawl' is not only framed as a major challenge for Zurich's urban future but it also resonates interestingly with the conceptual debates within the field of planning theory on what *is* and *ought to be*. There is today, a broad consensus that cities should grow by increasing spatial compactness; it has advocates among urban planners, government officials, citizens and developers but often remains a vision that is hard to translate into high-density living patterns.

To achieve compactness planning professionals not only rely on plans but also attempt to conceptualise urban morphology through design. In terms of models and measures, planners discuss and deploy scenario techniques. These practices are often very technical and focus on the conceptualisation and calculation of physical structures. Yet, planners operate in processes embedded by laws, systems, public expectations and political interests.

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[39] The design plan is a planning instrument part of the land-use planning *[Nutzungsplanung]*. Similar to the zone plan *[Zonenplan]* and the building regulations *[Baureglement]* it further specifies the use of a clearly delineated area. The design plan refines the specifications of the zoning code with additional statements on use, development, construction and amenities. This is why we also speak of "special land-use plans" *[Sondernutzungsplanung]*.

In this first section I will analyse two meetings in which the *Thurgauerstr* is being translated into a GP; a practical and often apolitical moment where a comprehensive and specialised action plan is formulated and defined. The GP's[40] response to urban problems varies according to the level of its normative sense of order. This kind of urban plan-making is not only concerned with improvement of the physical organisation but the formulation of typological categorisations. Focussing on how images invoke problematisations of urban form and place that support particular normative notions of urban re-ordering over others, this section explores how principles and rules are achieved through visualisations and without (immediate political) command or control. Drawing back to how planning has been rethought as design practice, I aim to show how categorical work is done and sustained through procedural work and the mutual alignment of concepts and visualisations.

Section two, explores the introduction of the municipal plan [*Kommunaler Richtplan*] and how the establishment of another rule is related to diagonal governance, but also to the expectation of formulating good urban order as normative premise for conducting planning.

Section three further examines the ways in which categories gain prescriptive character through processes of classification and specification. How is it that categorisations produce ruling without authority, which means that the ideal of urban order is seen as paramount to induce a strong sense of idealism and to achieve good city form as the highest order of what planning is or ought to do is the object of analysis in the first section. Such processes that reproduce how things are, and how they ought to be, produce the average reality of planning as a para-state exercise of physically territorialising the urban and its form, uses and structures. Associated to practices of normalisation, city planning posits form, use and volumes as a categories to optimise urban order within dialogic urban development projects.

In the final section, I connect these observations back to the discussion on enduring and contentious problematisation in planning. By the end of this chapter, it will become clear how normative idea(l)s and good city theories are put in coherence through normative prescriptions[41].

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[40] They overwrite the existing zoning code for their special purpose and can be commanded by private developers or as an initiative led by the municipality.

[41] Take for instance a map that aims to show the physical delineation of a territory at a given scale. This object not only functions as an ordering device but operates at the same time as how the work of their enactment should come to be (Suchman 2011).

5.1 A city of principles

Thurgauerstrasse Areal, which covers around 65,000 m2 , is one of the largest building land reserves in the city of Zurich, and "has an important function in the further urban development and inner densification of Zurich." This description can be found on the municipality of Zurich's webpage. Accordingly, "the City of Zurich intends to develop a lively and 'identity-creating district' (*«identitätsstiftenden Quartierteil»*) on the site." About 1,800 people will be able to live in the new part of the quarter. Moreover, the district is to provide a good mix and meet the municipal requirements with regard to maintaining and increasing the proportion of affordable housing and commercial space, the goals of the 2000-watt society and the cantonal growth requirements.

As a research intern in the municipality of Zurich's Office for City building (*Amt für Städtebau*, hereafter AfS) from September to November 2015, I received an invitation from the *Thurgauerstr* project coordinator to follow the elaboration of a 'rezoning procedure', part of a *«Gestaltungsplanverfahren»* (*Gestaltungsplan*, hereafter GP). As discussed with our overseers, we should at least witness three ongoing planning processes, which were all preferably at different stages of elaboration. We therefore had meetings with the planners coordinating and overseeing the projects of *Mannegg* and *Zollstraße* and, as just mentioned, were able to follow more concretely the transition of the *Thurgauerstr* project from a *«Testplanung»* to a GP. It is important here to not get lost in the specificity of designations, procedures or applications and their interrelation within institutional systems. An aspect, which is not so uncommon given the vertical, horizontal but also diagonal governance arrangements that planning processes are subject to in the institutional context of Zurich's planning system.

An objective I set myself early on, when encountering this mass of planning devices, was to understand the way planning instruments are used, both in relation to the institutional complexity as well as practices that shifted progressively from 'managing' urban extensions to concerns with urban quality and the conceptual development of place identities. Not only understanding regulatory functions and context-specific codes, but exploring how new conceptions of the city are mobilised to reframe the problems of built form categorisations leading to a juxtaposition between regulating and/or designing urban space.

A day before the meeting was about to take place, two copies of the same handout laid on the desk we shared. I studied it briefly. With the handout came two other documents: a 'report' (*«Schlussbericht»*) and a diagram. The diagram was a top down illustration of a GP-*verfahren* [Figure 5], illustrating the step-by-step constituencies of planning processes. I knew from previous email exchanges that this meeting was the first of a series to develop an *«Entwurf»* ('draft' or 'design') of the GP and thus was taking place right after the test planning. From the diagram, I learned that prior to a GP-*Entwurf*, two preparatory procedures needed to be fulfilled, which help to initiate and conceptualise the planning process.

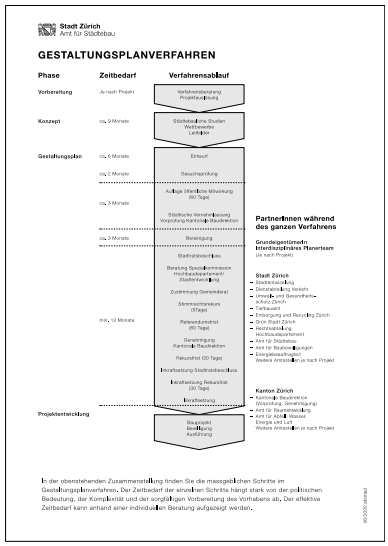

Figure 5. Gestaltungsplanverfahren

Depending on the project, if private or public, various sources can determine its start. The GP-*Entwurf* is developed and issued within the course of six to eight months. After a public display, several resolutions and referenda take place which can easily lead to a planning process of two to three years before project development can start.

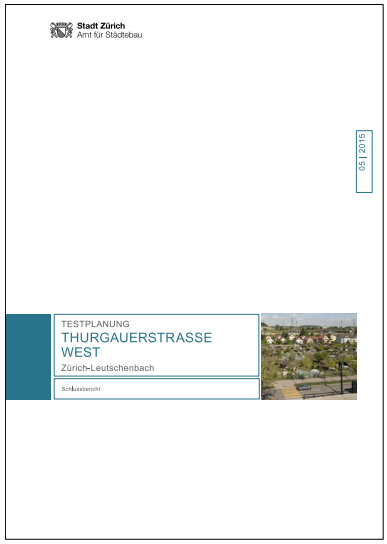

Figure 6. Testplanung Thurgauerstr. W

The report retraced the ways in which various challenges, motifs, mechanisms and results determined the course of the test planning [Figure 6]. Structured in five sections, and just about to be published, the report sets out to be a written and visual account prescribing key principles of good city form, articulating both regulatory procedures and premises with aesthetic ideas about the organisation of urban space. More than a representation of endless bureaucracy, as we are about to see, the report plays a crucial role in the purposeful mediation, referencing and patterning of the project.

According to the report and following the zoning code (*«Bau- und Zonenordnung»*, hereafter BZO) of the municipality of Zurich, the perimeter of the *Thurgauerstr* is subject to a 'design plan obligation' (*«Gestaltungsplanpflicht»*).

Situated in *Leutschenbach*, on the northern periphery of Zurich, the *Thurgauerstr* plot is almost entirely in the possession of the city of Zurich. *Leutschenbach* is one of the 'development areas' (*«Entwicklungsgebiete»*) in the north of Zurich, on the border with the *Opfiker Stadtteil Glattpark*. The 78 ha large area directly adjoins the Oerlikon railway station to the East. According to the 'development concept' (*Entwicklungskonzept* [Figure 7]) from 2000 and the leitbild from 2012, the excellent location and transport links to the airport and motorway make the district a highly attractive location. It is intriguing how these two documents, the development concept and the *Entwicklungsleitbild* not only convey conceptions of the city but how these documents are seen as 'self-contextualising', meaning their form and state as a kind of bureaucratic document make them valuable without contextualising moves in the framework of the planning process.

Considered as one of the last land resources to be developed 'from scratch', the tes planning report emphasises how in a period of rapid urban growth, this urban development project will be part of Zurich's inward development strategy.

> *With its approximately 65,000 square metres of land, it represents one of the city's largest undeveloped land reserves and is therefore key to Zurich's urban development and inward densification.*

These statements could be read as contradictory. In fact, 'inward development' (*«Verdichtung nach Innen»*) in the context of Zurich is a problematisation which emerged in the early 1990s (cf. next session) and was consolidated with the enunciation of the Swiss planning law in 2014, which limits settlement areas (*Raumplanungsgesetz* (hereafter *RPG*)).

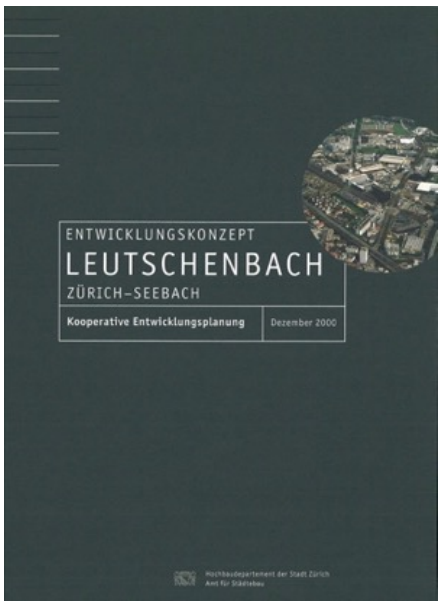

Figure 7. Entwicklungskonzept

According to Lopefe and Eisinger (2017), urban and spatial planning face new problems, which need to deal with the transformation of the existing urban fabric and differ considerably from previous expansions on green fields, or the reconversion of brownfields. Yet, the *Thurgauerstr* is an unconstructed land reserve where allotment gardens are about to disappear and be replaced by mobilising concepts (cf. *«Entwicklungsgebiet»*) and visions developed a decade

ago (cf. *«Entwicklungskonzept»*), which now are being connected to contemporary challenges like compact or inward urban development.

However, the value of the report persuades through its form and purpose, and elicits a sense of appropriateness by including a range of categorisations and graphic elements by placing them in relation to institutional goals and legal settings outside the report. The four maps in this section pinpoint the location, the dynamic development, the perimeter and the ownership status. Next to the sections on 'framework and process' (*«Rahmen und Ablauf»*) or 'results and further proceedings' (*«Ergebnisse und weiteres Vorgehen»*), the two stages of the competition and the proposal for an urban development concept are presented in detail in the last two sections.

Further on, the report explicitly endorses a normative view of how the urban area of the *Thurgauerstr* ought to be structured drawing on a range of principles and conceptual requirements. To this end, built and spatial typologies were developed and sought to 'tackle problems of structural density and the relationship between land-uses on the site, as well as with regards to the development project and planning process'[42]. This problematisation collectively represents the main principles of a variety of intrinsically related rules, paradigms and values. Oriented towards plan and image, articulating the *Thurgauerstr* unit with the municipal level, the report sets a prescriptive agenda based on concepts and concerns of (inward) urban development, whereby the planning process plays a subjugated role as we will see in the next two sections.

Density as quality

Speaking of the steps ahead and those already behind, the two municipal planners orienting the planning process and today's session start the workshop by emphasising the importance of quality. To achieve quality in built form, we need to ensure 'the quality of the planning process' (*«qualifizierter Planungsverfahren»*). Both go hand in hand. Clarifying today's 'meeting agenda' (*«Sitzungsablauf»)*, both speak about the importance of this particular project in institutional but also territorial terms [Figure 8].

[42] Orig. «(...) Antworten auf die Fragen der baulichen Dichte, der Anordnung und des Verhältnisses von unterschiedlichen Nutzungen auf dem Areal sowie zur Erschliessung und zur Etappierung (..) » p. 12

Above all, municipal Planner A plugs the project into its wider context clarifying the strategy of inward development. Hereby, he not only translates normative guidelines into this setting, but actually reframes them so as qualities to be applicable to the project in question. Building up on the test planning but also in reference to inward development as principle and law, Planner A contextualises the project's aim within the cantonal and regional *Richtplan* arguing that the application of mixed use and density parameters (*Vorgaben*) elaborated in the urban development concept (*städtebaulicher Richtplan*) will explore the potential of the urban area in question. Not only conjuring up other contexts, the planner justifies the rezoning according to principles of vertical governance (i.e. «*Übergeordnete Planungsinstrumente»*) and urban form (I.e. *«Nutzungsmix»*), aligning thus two modes of expertise. Interesting on this note is how both institutional or bureaucratic standards and architectural knowledge mutually constitute each other to form a particular conduit and language.

Figure 8. Presentation during the 1st GP-meeting © J. Paulos

All of this information was conveyed in three introductory sentences, not lasting more than five to ten minutes. I was only able to digest all of this, because, once I transcribed my notes, I entered a range of ten to twelve keywords, as for instance '*Richtplan', 'Quartierentwicklung', 'Siedlungsplanung' or 'Nutzungsmix'* etc. into a search engine. Navigating through the web, looking up institutional webpages and reading official documents then became a part-time activity in order to understand what planners as public officials were dealing with.

Let's take, for instance, the category of 'densification' (*«Verdichtung»*). The idea of growing compact is omnipresent in official documents such as the zoning code. In a pamphlet that accompanied the revision of the zoning code (*Bau- und Zonenordnung*; hereafter BZO) in 2015, entitled *«Gerechter»*, the idea of 'retrofitting sprawl' is conveyed by the simple formula of building denser. Density is associated with quality or more exactly, densification operations need to ensure a qualitative framing of urban development. In other words, the focus on density as quality demands simultaneous attention to both measurements and values. Here, density plays a double role as it transits and transports numbers into visions and vice versa (Troxler 2012). From this perspective normative prescriptions of building and designing dense urban environments include the desire for forms of good, just and aesthetic urban living.

In contrast, densification or compactness is not to be associated with building high, or crowdedness but the 'reconversion spatial and built resources'.

In order to diminish potential disagreements accompanying the revision of the zoning code in 2013, the city of Zurich organised a temporary exhibition named *Wachsen, aber richtig!* (Getting Growth Right). The entrance of the city hall was 'decorated' with a gigantic lettering announcing the occasion [Figure 9].

The flyer distributed in relation with the exhibition, speaks of growth as an imperative, only if quality is ensured *(«Wachstum nur mit Qualität»*).

Figure 9. Entrance to the town hall © Müller Sigrist Architekten

More and more people are living and working in Zurich. This is why more living and working space will be and working areas within the urban area. The demand for "densification" is omnipresent.

> *The high quality of life in the city of Zurich and the desire for densification are in tension with each other. New buildings must therefore fit into the existing urban fabric. At the same time, the typical character of the neighbourhood should be preserved, as should the green and open spaces.*

Reading further on the municipality's webpage, one can see this:

> *The goals of the changes are: The residential quarters are to be densified in a differentiated and high-quality manner, areas for industry and commerce as well as for public functions are to be secured, valuable townscape and neighbourhood structures are to be preserved, open and green spaces are to be used in a variety of ways, and public-oriented ground floor use is to be promoted.*

Such a perspective indicates the possibilities of implying quality, and governing with forms of 'anti-political action'; that is, forms of knowledge, public institutions and political positions that are grounded and formulated *'in relation to the needs of the collective to reach agreement on matters of common interest'* (Barry 2002:271). Let's consider the importance of categories such as densification and the public and professional debates on accessibility, housing and land-use following these 'post-growth' debates occurring as part of the enunciation of the municipal building and zoning code. While the planners and public officials framed the enunciation of the new zoning code as progressive:

> *The building and zoning regulations are the result of social discourse in which various demands and needs must be taken into account. and needs must be taken into account.*
>
> *The exhibition "Getting Growth Right" shows which changes to the two planning instruments are being made. The adjustments are also a result of the concrete experiences that have been made in the last more than ten years with the current regulations.*

The discussion in 2013 mostly revolved around specific points such as ground floor restrictions or the enunciation of new types of housing zones (*Wohnzone W3b*). Yet, what is more broadly at stake here is zoning's impact on sprawl, which is debated publicly on a good vs bad, or right versus wrong basis. After all, BZO determines exactly where what may be built and how. Binding for land and property owners, the problem is how inward development is a mechanism of managing built resources, which is either seen as potential or restriction. With a zoning code that imposes too many restrictions, a lot of interests are under threat, ranging from stakeholders, developers or housing cooperatives. As Kurath (2018) has shown, the whole communication process occurred in a 'top-down and expert-driven' framework, with an exhibition and public events mostly focusing on architectural aspects, and lacking deliberative forums.

A growing body of experts are pushing for 'inward development' as the only mode of retrofitting sprawl and are faced with heterogenous public opinion and a political apparatus that is increasingly sceptical about how this inward development could be achieved, as seen with the many objections and ongoing delays of the BZO revision (initially commenced in 2013 and only partially accepted as of 2016). Until today, the BZO remains unapproved due to the many recourses and instances involved in the procedural making. However, what is interesting is how those involved in its making remain so rigid about defending and aligning a certain disposition between good design and good urban living, while publics and politicians would welcome less rules. assigned with the same conservatist spirit as BZO Koch and harshly criticised for focussing on preservation and being too deliberately regulative.

Coming into public debate since the early 1990s, with Ursula Koch's famous speech, structural density is to be understood as intervention in already existing built settlements, following the below rationale.

> *"Zurich is already built. The city does not to be built but remodelled"*[43]
>
> *—Ursula Koch, 1988*

Insisting that the city of Zurich is not like Shanghai or Hong Kong where city-building is about raising high-rises from scratch but that it should be a careful craft in compliance with existing urban structures. Koch is not only a known political figure, she also tends to get associated with the zoning code. The *BZO Koch*, named after the then head of the building department (*«Hochbauvorsteherin»*), was approved in the 1992 referendum but well over 400 objections[44] blocked the bill for years. The zoning regulations were intended to increase the quality of life in the city, stabilise the number of jobs and achieve population growth with the highest possible quality of living. Zurich as a place to live and work was a priority, which is why maintaining the industrial zones remained an important goal.

At the beginning of the 1990s, a paradigm shift emerged that has significantly shaped the urban planning agenda and cooperation between relevant actors and institutions to this day. As shown

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[43] Orig. In German: «Die Stadt ist gebaut. Sie muss nicht neu- sondern umgebaut werden»

[44] In 1995, the cantonal building director Hans Hofmann swept the city's BZO off the table and replaced it with his own, which allowed much higher buildings. It was not until 1999 that the city of Zurich again issued its own BZO, which sought a balance between BZO Koch and BZO Hofmann.

by Devecchi (2012), the main point of contention in the urban development discussions back then was the new BZO, which was heavily discussed in the city parliament. In addition to this polarisation of urban politics, the prevailing bureaucratic understanding of planning, in which the city government and above all the head of the building department asserted their primacy in urban planning issues was not only responsible for the aforementioned debates, but created a clear divide between the city government and private interests. The planning ideals of the time corresponded to traditional 'area development' (*«Gebietsentwicklung»)*, which was characterised by a legally and procedurally prescribed planning process (Wolff 2012). The various planning steps followed each other sequentially, which meant a clear separation of responsibilities between private actors (i.e. management and financing) and state institutions (examination and approval). For this reason, the investors limited themselves to seeing the local political institutions as formal and functional decision-making bodies (Kühne 1997).

The Koch episode is an emblematic event in Zurich's urban politics and it is an important interlude because it not only shows the complexity between actors interests and institutions, but also how various fronts problematise city development rules by mobilising political, historical and economic values.

An important moment that changed this balance in the context of Zurich was the implementation of the *«Stadtforum»* and how it solved an existing imbroglio in the reconversion and redevelopment of *«Zürich West»*. The circumvention of the above-mentioned public-private impasse, or as I would put it a rule-value divide, occurred towards a more dialogical understanding of urban planning. Accompanied by the introduction of the *«Testplanung»,* a planning method, and the reorganisation of the AfS which had a mission to return planning to its physical roots by tacking a new stance and attitude towards the city.

This new attitude towards the city is often framed as representative of how the municipality of Zurich has been dealing with urban planning and design as conceptual matter (Eisinger and Reuther 2007). Since the late 1990s and the reorganisation[45] of the AfS, the vision of re-establishing planning as design practice has led to an understanding of doing planning as craft.

[45] When Zurich's citizens voted in 1996 to reorganise the city administration, one of the consequences was the dissolution of the then City Planning Office. From then on, city planning was distributed among various departments and agencies.

> *«One of the objectives of the reorganization of the office for urbanism was to reestablish urban planning as a design process but now involving collaboration with external partners. the office sees itself as a workshop and laboratory.*
>
> *— Eisinger and Reuther, 2007*

The former head of planning Regula Lüscher —in keeping with the tradition of ETH Zurich– – claimed that the municipality's planning office needs to find a clear 'view'/'position' (*«Haltung»*) about how urban areas ought to be structured and developed. In favour of an urban design oriented towards the *«Neues Bauen»*[46] of the mid-20th century, this new attitude towards the city largely rejects historical references to building traditions and the re-contextualisation to traditional cityscapes. Conductive to a progression of ideas about urban form, this kind of conceptual urbanism strives to push principles and refine their implementation. The persistence of principles of good urban form is characterised by Talen as neither particularly new nor isolated. Notions such as mixed use, environmentalism, accessibility or compact development are all part of a continuous academic and professional debate[47] (Bohl 2000).

Zurich's conceptual urbanism is connected with a long line of views about good urban form. A central figure of urbanist normative visions is, for instance, Kevin Lnych (1960, 1961). His epical work, which is part of an intellectual traditions that dominated much of urban planning and design scholarship, provides a value structure for what is meant by 'good cities'(ibid.:2):

> *«Decisions about urban policy, or the allocation of resources, or where to move, or how to build something, must use norms about good and bad. Short-range or long-range, broad or selfish, implicit or explicit, values are an inevitable ingredient of decision. Without some sense of better, any action is perverse. When values lie unexamined, they are dangerous.»*
>
> *— Kevin Lynch, 1960*

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[46] The *Neues Bauen* movement emerged in the 1920s as an architectural style of the New Objectivity/Sobriety. Inspired by new building techniques such as iron construction and reinforced concrete construction, construction came to the fore; concealing architecture and decorative elements were undesirable. This made it possible to realize simple forms and their decomposition: simple cubic forms, interlocking volumes, free-standing wall panels and bold projections.

[47] Too often these ideals are attacked by critical (urban) scholars as superficial and insidious because it perpetuates liberal ideologies and thus supplements a corporate society with a corresponding aesthetic order (Harvey 1997). While many critics reject the idea that a set of planning principles can never work to fulfil the good of all people, this is hardly the point of normative theorising.

Instead of evaluating normative prescriptions of urban form in a political economy framework, a pragmatist ANT view posits the debate surrounding the application of normative principles in a different light – much in line with what Talen suggests, pragmatist ANT asks to what extend urban form and function become independent agents integral to their application.

Normative views, which, as opposed to more traditional planning processes, are explicitly oriented toward image and plan at the local level. This sort of reliance on prescriptive agendas presupposes there are certain solutions to the continuous crisis of 'metropolitan fragmentation and decentralisation' (Talen 2000).

Against the background of a political reform, and the reorganisation of the public sector, a workshop took place in 1999 which focussed on approaching the city as a whole, reflecting on its spatial future perspectives, with the aim of developing an orientation aid for steering the development processes. In addition to the existing zoning regulations, and regional or cantonal plans, a comprehensive picture of the current city situation and the future of urban development was needed. The search for such a picture took place in the *Kaderworkshop* in 2001.

Embedded in the process of reorganisation of the AfS, which aimed at a new self-image and working method[48], architects, planners, historians and monument conservators now came together to develop a new profile and take a position for three days in the ETH pavilions on the *Hönggerberg*. Sifting through documents, exchanging experiences and sketching maps, those professionals developed a range of 'sketches' (*«Handskizzen»*) that resulted in conceptual leitmotifs and a protocol of conduct [Figure 10]. Expressing an interpretation of the city's peculiarities as well as different readings of its potentials and perspectives, the focus was less on a sophisticated spatial development strategy for the entire city, but rather on an action plan on how to approach, read and feature the various parts of the city of Zurich.

Figure 10. Sketches that led to the elaboration of «Entwicklungsgebiete and -konzepte» © AfS

[48] "Instead of reaction (appraisal, consultation) action, creative forethought and foresight (concepts, models)"

The idea of the 'development areas' (*«Entwicklungsgebiete»*) emerged from this workshop. Drawing on the metaphor of rooms, the attitude towards the city was specified by rethinking the specificities of each district. Thinking against the rigidity of static regulations, the districts were thought as dynamic development areas, whereby differentiated strategies would be developed to ensure and deal with the social, economic and cultural identities of these areas. By tracing historical and built linkages, planning starts by analysing the values and meanings of the built fabric, through its historical testimonies, demographic legibility and infrastructural composition, yet integrating these aspects into emerging urban development standards and settings.

This way of marking a break with planning as a simple matter of control, efficiency and utility. Against the general rule of modernist city design, the principles of the AfS' conceptual urbanism are attended through an underlying set of normative ideas about the meaning of planning. Principles like diversity, connectivity, equity and public space not only enrich the conceptual arsenal of planning, but they allow for new expressions of the collective good via form [Figure 11]. It is precisely here where we need to make a pause. Not to criticise the naivety or triviality of these principles in the face of an economic or political reality or how the planners arrived at these categories, but to understand how these principles turn into a *patterned language*[49] facilitating certain procedures and reframing rules.

Figure 11. Sequence presenting the working groups and models of the Entwicklungskonzept Leutschenbach © AfS

[49] Legal anthropologist Annelise Riles speaks of 'patterned language' as a sorting exercise in which concepts, vocabularies and categories are cut, inserted and arranged to generate proper phrasing and collective recognition of verbal and material formulation. Showing how language plays a pivotal role in the elaboration of documents, Riles draws on the materialized importance of these documents to generate repetition and coherence, and thus stabilizing contextual shifts and perspectival experience (Riles 1998:387).

Speaking about the rules of 'city building' (*«Städtebau»*), architectural historian and director of Zurich's regional planning office Angelus Eisinger not only hopes for more density, but actually breaks a lance for densification. As conveyed during a SIA[50] roundtable, retrofitting sprawl is not only to be understood as a quantitative process. Instead, for Eisinger, it is a process coupled to higher qualities. "Inward development promotes mixing and slows down the functional disintegration in many agglomerations," the urbanist expects. At the same time, he warns against reproducing traditional urban patterns, or building concepts that seem nostalgic. With this statement, Eisinger implies what he understands somewhere else as new formulations of time and space through urbanity. In his seminal book *Die Stadt der Architekten: Anatomie einer Selbstdemontage*[51], Eisinger (2005) comments on the emerging interpretations of urbanity as reference points in after-modern attempts to rethink the urban, not only as replacement for schematic or functionalist formulas but as 'new approaches to the city' (*«Neue Zugänge zur Stadt»).*

Back at the meeting, one of the central aspects of ensuring a transition from the *Testplanung* to the more technical rezoning application is contextualised as a moment repeatedly reassembled by three frames: historical, collaborative and procedural.

When Planner B is making the case for his rezoning application, explaining why a zone needs to be densified, we are not only witnessing how it is about to take place, but also encounter an ensemble of moments where architectural expertise meets institutional knowledge or, put differently, a series of moments in which institutional knowledge has been reframed as dialogic through notions of urban form and architectural expertise; consolidated through both an urban and political history; but also through the consolidation of planning processes by means of standardised procedures, principles, vocabularies and references such as the test planning which is an integrative part of the GP-*verfahren*. Those facilitate a translation of form towards land-use specifications whereby, municipal, regional or cantonal strategies establish the context that problematises and justifies the occurrence of such development.

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[50] *Schweizerischer Ingenieur- und Architekturverein* ; the Swiss Society of Engineers and Architects is Switzerland's leading professional association for construction, technology and environment specialists

[51] Own transl. « The City of Architects: Anatomy of a Self-Demonstration »

In a first moment within this attitude towards the area as an *Entwicklungsgebiet* or, to put it differently, a strategy that was not only conceptualized and enunciated almost two decades ago but which still carries a problematization to do planning by design; to move on from the modernist bastion of kaleidoscopic rule-making towards a creative, imaginative and form-based process as Regula Lüscher once would have formulated it. This idea of circumventing conventional planning approaches like zoning plans and the overbuilding of specific areas, as we have just seen, redefines interaction through a more dialogical, procedural and horizontal process.

In a second step, it is interesting here how diverse planning procedures then and now rely on collaborative mechanisms and the composition of focus-group arrangements in order to achieve a comprehensive observation of urban space [Figure 12]. These kinds of decision-making arrangements do not happen in a void, but shared understating is achieved by the special features and common elaborations during these meetings, and in combination with the city's and district's *«characteristics»*. In other words, planning principles are problematised and tested with the help of intermediaries, rather than negotiated or traded only between specialists and other actors. As Eisinger and Reuther have written: *"means of visual communication such as maps, plans, scale models, photographs, and sketches make it easier to negotiate and lay down binding approaches"* (2007:133).

Figure 12. An expert round during the testplanning phase © Stadt Zürich

In a third moment, it is inscribed in a procedural frame, as part of a GP-*verfahren* and so it is about properly translating the urban development concept into a conventional zoning map according to the BZO. Sprawl is the problem. The concept elaborated through the test planning phase adopts a local view where the more general problem of sprawl is adapted to building density and mixed-use development. Although the planning process was marked by several disagreements (i.e. public space), compromise was found by the ambition to improve and upgrade the old industrial area. A core principle to this upgraded and integrated urban form was the technical notion of 'compact development'. Taking up a morphological perspective, it is remarkable how compactness is measured by units like scale, geometry, permeability and how principles emerge from the ways these categories get interpreted and formulated into principles.

In all these moments, the urban development concept is already an aggregate of contexts, categories, numbers and histories, which again is translated as whole into a set of procedures. Not cutting with previous meetings, but emphasising the results as one, the impact of zoning on sprawl is dependent and valid through many intermediaries, and yet, the local impact of zoning on urban pattern and form seems to be an expert-only role.

Before discussing particularities (see next section), the winning tenders of the architectural competition are shown via a PowerPoint presentation where the rezoning needs to complement the urban development plan. The urban development which focuses on form-based categories such as *«Verdichtung»* or *«Zonierung»* implies the use of physical form as a guiding principle. While all candidates seem to acknowledge that the development plan (and concept that goes with it) and the rezoning plan are two different things, the former is taken as a springboard for defining the latter. To put it differently, ground work is done on scale-models that use physical form and form-based aesthetics before the separation of land-uses is more specifically discussed. This asymmetry is anchored in the ways zoning is understood as a means of combating sprawl, although as Talen (2013) has famously written the relationship between sprawl and zoning is a dual problem, whereby form-based codes simply rely on different principles than urban patterning and thus are trivial in changing sprawl patterns.

The next section will present a more hands-on perspective on how this jump from testing forms to plotting zones occurs while institutional, historical and political contexts are conjured up whenever a broader framing is needed.

Testing visualisations

The meeting on which I focus here, aims to translate the outcomes of the test planning into a land-use plan. On this matter, *Meili Architekten*, the winning tenders of the design competition, present the area which ought to be rezoned. Using PowerPoint[52] to project the building guidelines, the architectural firm in question present a complex project with the help of a range of renderings.

Figure 13. Scale Model Thurgauerstr W © AfS

The pursuit of compact urban form in the «*Arealentwicklung»* of the *Thurgauerstr* is set on project-specific design standards. According to the architects, who won the competition (*«Auswahlverfahren»*), it is necessary to build 'a coherent and robust urban structure' (*«eine robuste urbane Struktur»*) from the beginning to the end of the perimeter, or a small piece of city in the city (*«ein grosses Stück Stadt als Fragment»*), to quote the architects. From this resolute stance, the team has developed a 'volumetrically balanced overall composition across the entire plot' [Figure 13].

Leading the audience through their project rationale, the architect and his associate (or assistant, I assume because he appeared very young), emphasised the idea of a strong *«Gesamtfigur»*, a kind of 'city-architectural form' (*«stadt-architektonische Gestalt»*).

[52] While I do not focus specifically of the agency of PowerPoint presentations, my reasoning here is very much inspired by Nina Wakeford's paper suggesting to take a look at how PowerPoint is used to produce evidence and expectation during meetings. Thinking of presentations and meetings as 'thick' events, rather than 'thin' devices of knowledge exchange (Wakeford 2006).

The formulated urban postulate of a "robust urban structure", which takes possession of the plot as a coherent settlement and establishes a strong building density (300 %), is demonstrated via scale-models from two differing angles.

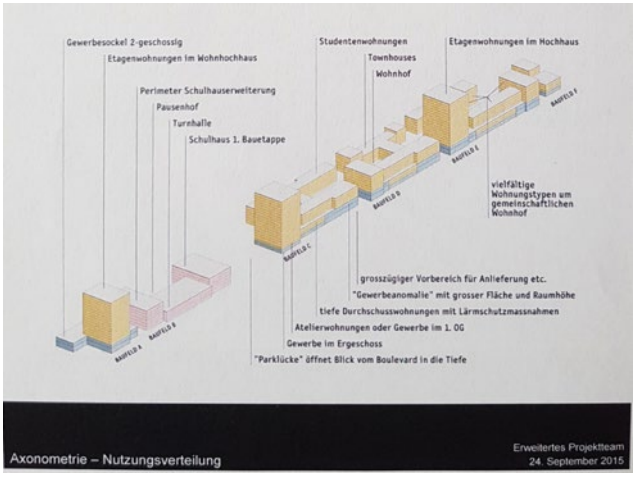

Figure 14. A section view of the project © AfS

The ‘piece of city (*«Stück Stadt»*) is expressed as result emanating through the implementation of mixed-uses that guarantee and envision lively and versatile base uses towards *Thurgauerstr* These requirements are keyed to location, where smaller unit sizes, street widths and lot area requirements are associated with zones “closer in”. The design of a generous front zone and the formation of a versatile boulevard underline this expression of interest [Figure 14]. The architects’ story centres around the articulation of three high-rises and the use of ‘public space design’ (*«Freiraumgestaltung»*). In the course of the development process, the design of open and public space, with its clear allocation of characteristic uses gained more clarity and sought to produce, according to the speaking architect, “differentiated atmospheres”.

Not only were these requirements and concepts presented orally and visually, revealing a normalising part of how to convey input from one meeting, workshop or forum to another, but it explicitly grounds only a few aspects of the whole planning process as visible work.

The planners, officials and other professionals, all received handouts for the session [Figure 15]. These hand-outs introduced the program and a template with the list of points that needed to be part of the design plan. Distributed in print to each single participant, this document plays a considerable role in defining and distinguishing the political, technical and urbanist considerations, but also in highlighting the point of departure of the process.

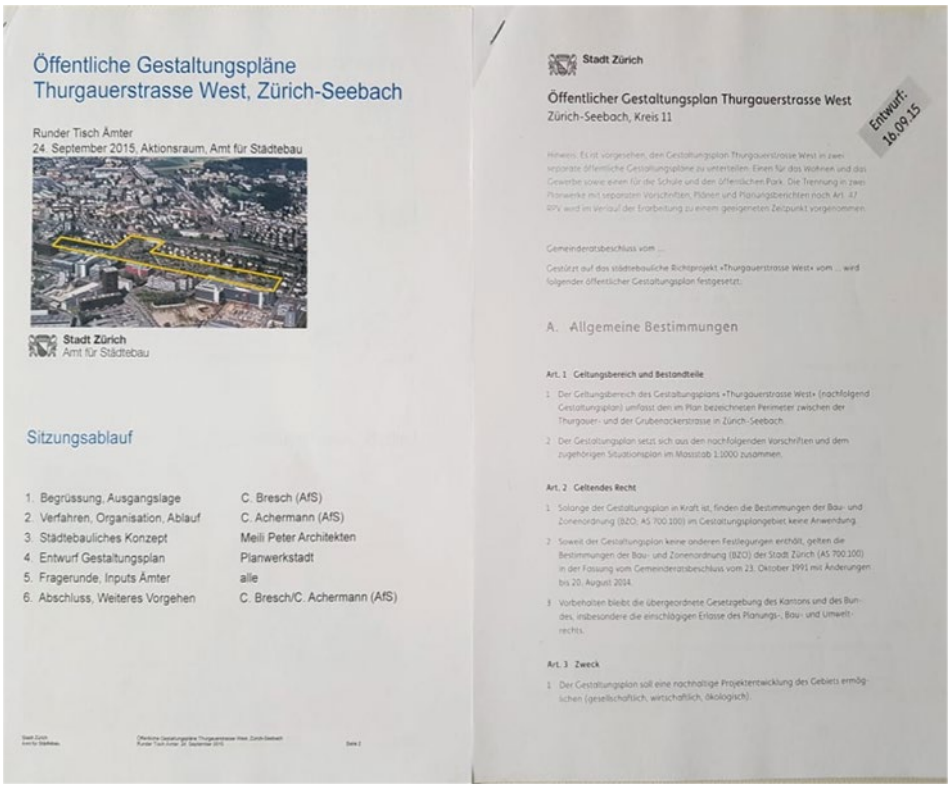

Figure 15 Meeting handout on the elaboration of a public land-use plan for the Thurgauerstr. W. AfS

Highlighting the importance of thinking about density as model and structure, this alienated mechanism of presenting work creates only a few possibilities for rethinking the range of developing *Thurgauerstr.* In addition to the PowerPoint presentation, the materiality of these hand-outs plays a role, as it helps connect tasks which were completed at another point in time and space with regulations that need to be fulfilled. As, for example, the pictures of models and renderings; objects fabricated during other meetings which now are recognised by producing their autonomy through the state of being represented here. Constituting a reality 'in the world', these documents produce continuity by generating 'sign-vehicles', intensifying, transporting and mediating decisions into the here and now.

It is no coincidence that in such moments the politico-legal parts are undermined and socio-technical programs acquire more importance. The municipal planners in charge, seem to exert a determining influence through their role in the delegation of responsibilities, conjuring up contexts but also leaving the floor to the architects or engineers when it is their turn to intervene. I am not arguing that anyone purposely eclipses political contexts or legal aspects. Nevertheless, working across professional boundaries, although realised through

institutionalised arrangements, depends on structured courses of articulation work; it is here where planning work is located most efficiently at the intersection with design. Replacing regulatory ways of seeing from an administrative nowhere, by claiming to see comprehensively with '*views from somewhere*' (Haraway 1988), is one way in which planning, in the context of Zurich, makes available a particular spatial idiom to articulate claims through visual artefacts.

Especially through maps, which are not only miniaturisations of the city as a whole object, but also allow artful integrations from different professional affiliations and partial translations across devices —from a report to a scale model to a public briefing— to take place. The *obligatory passage points*[53] are not the only prerogative of specialised planning but an aspect of normative and normalised expressions that are, on the one hand, formalised according to topical structure, and on the other, devised through what Suchman has termed located accountabilities, that is, how collective knowledge is dependent on specific locations and respective visions (Suchman 2002:96). An observation that interestingly resonates with Jonathan Metzger's (2013) analysis of stakeholder enactment during planning processes, referring to these step-by-step procedures as a translation of statements, which he argues in reference to Thompson (2005), "*ontological alignment by way of ontological choreography*". Expressed in and via materials of public action, these ways of planning and thinking 'on the map' translate statements of *'is'* into concrete propositions of *'oughts'*.

In the case of the *Thrurgauerstr* planning process, the various reunions, workshops, committees and competitions can be described as singular events, whereby a problem is articulated with a view from somewhere —*Thurgauerstr*—, and where specific contexts are mobilised and references are actualised so as to provide a valuable sense of legitimacy as seen in the previous section. Entangled in continuous and distributed material practices, that not only prescribe but discipline the planning endeavour at a dialogic conjuncture, conceptualised between specific design logics and its translation into collective values. This becoming effective of normative prescriptions through urban form is possible through the ability to utilise the propensity of things.

Let's rewind a little back in time and look at an image shown during a public workshop with local inhabitants as part of the test planning. Drawn by a local artist, the image shows the

[53] Cf. Chapter 3

boulevard. which will be the new epicentre of the *Thurgauer Areal* [Figure 16]. Trees, bikes, people and buggies appear at the leading edge; in short we get the feeling of a people-friendly and green strolling promenade. A second image takes a birds eye view of the future neighbourhood. Little green parks, recreation areas and bike paths fill the page. Like the performative character of most architectural renderings, these two images show specific elements and forms which focus on people, greenery and recreation, somewhat redefining the relationship between certain forms of being as part of a planning process.

Figure 16. Illustration of the boulevard. © Matthias Gnehm.

Unlike more traditional planning instruments, such as strategic master plans, these images guide urban development by displaying specific arrangements that should compose the future city. This necessity to visualise how local issues will be ensured is a key gesture to maximise people's affects by pointing towards activities of the common good. Such gesture, where mosaic instruments aim not to totalise but to classify what is common and what is not was

referred to by Farías (2018) as '*cosmogrammatic* operation'[54], which is an alignment of types, activities and elements aiming at re-articulating and qualifying what is collective 'by affecting and redefining the relationships between heterogeneous entities and processes' (ibid.:197).

Today, and mostly since the public procurement has been officially conducted by the municipality to design the various allotments, these images have sparked some attention. The blog of the *IG Leutschenbach*, for instance, accuses the municipality of 'greenwashing' using illustrations to tell fairy tales[55]. The association fears the high rises that could bring 'gentrification' or turn the district into a 'corporate suburbia'. On November 29, 2020, a referendum validated the legitimacy of the *GP*. Prior to that, public debates occurred on many occasions and the various associations and political parties reflected upon the positionality of public authorities in terms of planning and developing the city. What is interesting here is not the lack of acceptability from 'the public' or a failure in communication from the municipality, but how both entities imagine the role of the public in different ways.

While the test planning imagines the possibility of residents to becoming active participants through workshops where they communicate via images or presentations, different associations, on the other hand, position themselves against the opacity of governmental issues towards which they will never be able to contribute other than voice their concerns. Not only are the narratives of a democratic urban development insufficient, the categorisation of publics as 'passive' participants or 'projected' users completely lacks a nuanced understanding of the attitudes, perceptions, preferences and values of the people; an instrumental rationality which divulges no other way of *commoning* or the co-functioning between instrumental rationality and publics other than planning by design, and the occasional integration of concerned groups as informants, spectators or audiences into distributed procedures.

The images and other documents not only convey a certain 'on record' feeling, they serve to convey a sense of achievement; one where settings aim to recreate the conditions once established so that a different point in time, similar alliances can be formed generating the conditions of what may yet become by ways of collective exploration and effort. Underwritten by a democratising ethos, these preliminary and formal planning processes contribute

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[54] A *cosmogram* can be understood as a technological world-picture which includes the things, categories and equipment at the disposal of the planner allowing insights and oversights to be relevant in his/her practice (Tresch 2007)

[55] https://iggrubenacker.ch/blog/

fundamentally to the constitution of public action as epistemologically grounded whereby visual artefacts help generate legitimacy and craft realities; especially because these various material and symbolic practices entangle ontologically different entities such as nature and society into context-specific claims and sociotechnical judgements.

Not only are scales miniaturised but also interests, concepts and other figures. Rather than engaging the audience —in this case a range of public officials— the presentation submits a stern but architecturally compelling overview of the process and potential of the area. Numbers are translated into concepts; concepts become principles and 'the context' suggests it is not only relevant but necessary to act now. By context I refer to the constant allusion made by the municipal planners and commissioned architects that express urban development as a mode of organising space and land resources in the face of un-relentless growth. Regardless of these various translations into applications, which come as a package, it is important to take a moment and look at how visual representations make these assertions and project outcomes not only appear solid, but how they constitute a practical reason in which public action is entangled in what Matthew Hull (2012) calls 'prosaic documentary practices'; that is, the circulation of 'millions of maps, forms, letters, and reports' among various experts, politicians and publics.

5.2 Rule-based urbanism

In a special issue with *architheses*[56], Zurich's former planning director once deplored the restrictions that planners encounter when thinking about how to develop, and regulate the city. Making reference to the opaque bureaucratic jungle, Patrick Gmür enumerates the complexity of binding rules and existing strategies and further speaks of public, economic and political interests that all play a role. Gmür (2015) refers to the issue as follows: *"Urban planning does not move in a vacuum, but operates in a dense jungle of binding specifications, laws, strategies, public, political and economic interests that it must fulfil and satisfy."*

Zurich's planning director from 2010-2019 discusses the many challenges that planning in Zurich is facing. While urban density poses a structural problem, the political landscape carries

[56] a*rchithese* is an international publishing house on architecture and architectural theory with an editorial office in Zurich.

its own multifaceted agenda. More specifically, Gmür illustrates how planning law reflects principles of horizontal and vertical urban governance[57].

The search for good city form does not necessarily lead to a break with the rule-related legacy of modernist urbanism. This is because many rules and codes remain valid, but also because planning does not only exist at the nexus with design, or more generally, in a void. Given the example above, we can state that planners operate in and with a framework of rules. The concept of ruling would at first glance be associated with the power of governments and the authority conveyed by a set of legal, political and bureaucratic organisations. In this section I will examine how rules set the contours of what is problematic or not. At the same time, I aim to show how planning rules; meaning that planning practices shape the politics of problematising, categorising, seizing, plotting, developing, limiting, densifying or building urban territories.

Inward development as category

«Why don't we use the same parameters?»

This question was posed in a meeting discussing the objectives of elaborating the municipal 'guidance plan' *«Kommunaler Richtplan»*. In a discussion about how to translate measurement issues into a regulatory and comprehensive strategy, the planners involved kept identifying how to concentrate the degrees and increase the supply of housing, building sizes and dwelling units. Drawing on urban form characteristics, plots, patterns and policies are not only juxtaposed but play a crucial role in steering the discussion on how to retrofit sprawl. High density, contiguous and multi-purpose development are the solutions announced to 'repair' and 'fix' the problem of urban sprawl. The route is clear: counteract sprawl by offering dense urban cores which are constitutive of good human settlements. A line of approach made even clearer by the lately enunciated council order to implement a new comprehensive plan for the compact development of Zurich at the municipal level (see next section). Issued by the city council, the planners received the order to commonly elaborate a new planning instrument. This situation

[57] In the Canton of Zurich, an additional level is added with the regional planning associations anchored in the Planning and Building Act (PBG).

of radical indeterminacy not only shows how problems and objectives are pre-defined, and how a new planning instrument is seen as a means to account for, regulate and prescribe compact urbanisation, but it is equally revelatory of how rules and values are re-specified.

At the beginning of the meeting, each participant was invited to throw in ideas. For about twenty minutes all eight people[58] could 'brainstorm'. What became obvious immediately was the focus on the physical character for understanding density. The effect of rules is tangible only through the connection of existing material forms and categories. For instance, various physical dimensions like the *'Areal'* (site) or '*Siedlung'* (settlement) defined the way participants think about density. When problematised in terms of urban form, density can be applied as ratio to measure the placement lines and plot coverage of building types and heights. Form-based codes and rules then prescribe how urban form defines space. Not only do existing rules affect urban form (a requirement which defines the building seize and configuration) but the character of existing urban formations prescribes the motives of rule-making. In this situation, the case of Zürich West is taken as a missed opportunity; although a great example of revitalisation at least two interlocutors draw on the missing articulation between building heights and street widths. This focus on rules of urban forms and practices of city building led to a discussion on methods of urban measurement and how to effectively devise models that expands the zone as a predilected unit of measure.

Next to the physical attributes, the planners started aggregating surfaces. Drawing on an existing planning instrument, the zoning code (BZO) was pivotal in ordering the various meanings of compact urban development. The protagonists started to debate alternative models of compact growth not only departing from zonal categories, but also by drawing on the possibility of including surface representations as an exploratory modelling technique. This transition from zoning elements to surfaces, with its emphasis on continuity, tends to characterise urban form as generalised pattern. With the help of map representations, one of the planners started discussing the articulation between non-uniform and uniform spatial distributions which were calculated on the basis of continuous density-population measurements. Not only is this jump from a constrained variability of entities to surfaces speculative, it is also reductive in the sense that a mosaic graph, representing the spatial

[58] The group of people was constituted by two cartographers and four planners with diverse backgrounds ranging from geography to political science and architecture. All are part of the '*Team Planung'*; a group which meets on a bi-weekly basis to discuss matters of strategic planning work in the AfS.

distribution of built structures and which has a particular correspondence to the 'real world', is taken as starting point to suggest directions for compact urban development.

Going from form to patterns, virtual frontiers became strong agents in justifying capacities. During the discussion *Zürich Nord* became way more than a geographic unit. Representing the lowest level of actual physical urban form, this part of Zurich is designated as the last urban area with a low urban density profile and great resources. Informed by the fractal geometry emerging from morphological comparisons within the Zurich municipal territory, *Zürich Nord* is a characteristic example of space-filling argumentation. Due to low residential and commercial density in terms of physical urban development, the ways in which *Zürich Nord* is conceptualised prescribes the measurement of a municipal strategy that seeks to offer compactness by ways of being concerned with asserting built structures and prescribing physical planning applications. It then was attributed with a low urban density profile because of its irregularity in comparison to other areas. This way of locating potential resources for continuous building starts from elements such as zones. Usually applied to small geographical scales, where the built and material properties of the city are taken from conditions of form, resources are calculated as in relation to urban physical form. When zooming out to the city level, this structuration of physical urban conditions with its morphological and geographical detail gets blurred. Translating zoning parameters into an urban strategy is more than an aggregation of forms resulting from different patterns and arrangements of streets, houses or lots.

The observation is also made by the two GIS engineers from the cartography who argue that urban form offers a level of detail intrinsic to its units. Here, we have another kind of problem-statement where efficiency is not merely measured and evaluated on the basis of street segments, plots and topographical systems. Beyond the measuring of variables such as 'average plot length' and 'proportion of blocks with pavements and/or intersections', the spatial structure of the whole city brings other implications unable to be expressed with detailed urban form tools. Such a problem-statement was also advanced by the city council although arguably not based on the same epistemological reasoning as the one advanced by the cartographer. Drawing on a different technical reasoning, the cartographers refer to statistics and how these might be integrated as heat maps whereby one would see the gradual shifts of density without falling into the trap of delineating plots or segments.

Finally, and this was the most interesting part, is the fact that the existing vocabulary about urban form was accentuating not only the tone of the debate, but also the views of what

constitutes optimal urban growth and aesthetic urban form. Simultaneously, the new problematisation of how to come up with a municipal strategy was lacking a common language and increasingly framed either in the technical, linguistic and material realm of urban form, or the elusive realm of politics, as we are about to see in the next section.

Inward development as politics

On May 22nd 2013, the SP[59] motioned a query (GR-Nr. 2013/183) by which they instructed the city council to issue a municipal *Richtplan*. A motion obliges the city council to prepare a draft on how a resolution can be amended or repealed. If the motion finds a majority in the municipal council and is thus referred to the city council, the city council has two years to elaborate and subsequently submit this draft to the municipal council. The motion said the following:

> *The city council is instructed to issue a communal settlement guideline plan which defines the spatial and objective goals of settlement development more narrowly than the regional guideline plan. In particular, it contains specifications on the intended use and development structures as well as on the provision of open space in Zurich and its neighbourhoods. Statements are made on the potential for settlement development.*
>
> *The communal settlement guideline plan defines binding proportions for uses that are prerequisites for a functioning, ecological, economic and socially sustainable urban development. This includes quantification and a possible time frame.*

On November 6th 2013, the city council responded with a two-page letter, signed by mayor Corinna Mauch, representing the city council. In particular, this response highlights the complex and interwoven planning system arguing that rule-based

> *Spatial planning is intended to influence development in a targeted manner in all spatially relevant areas. In the Canton of Zurich, this is done in particular with guideline planning and land use planning at the cantonal, regional and communal levels. Planning at lower levels must correspond to planning at higher levels, and land use planning of all types and levels must correspond to structure planning (§ 16 para. 1 PBG). The structure plans of all levels, divided into the sub-structure plans "settlement", "landscape", "transport", "supply, disposal" and "public buildings and facilities", thus form a coherent whole. While the regions always include several municipalities, the Zurich region by law (cf. § 12 para. 1 sentence 2 PBG) extends exclusively to the municipal area of the city of Zurich. The planning perimeters for the regional and municipal structure plans are therefore congruent for the city of Zurich.*

[59] Social Democratic Party of Switzerland

Further, the letter specifies how the city council would not necessarily favour such a move, since existing planning instruments afford the necessary conditions of how to plan and develop Zurich's urban territory:

> *The city council is of the opinion that the two drafts of the regional structure plan and the zoning ordinance, which were made available to the public on 24 October 2013, basically meet the concerns of the motions. However, it can imagine that at a later date, for areas with additional density potential, such as those shown in the draft of the Regional Structure Plan for Settlement, it could be possible, as part of the planning process and as a preliminary stage to the land-use planning specifications, to make specifications at communal level. However, this should be examined at the appropriate time.*

During the council meeting taking place on January 29th 2014, the debate is intensified and was then settled by a vote. At the beginning, the director of the *Hochbaudepartment*, André Odermatt rejected the motion but was willing to probe the query as a *Postulat*; a postulate asks the city council to examine whether and how it can implement a concern or an idea (into existing instruments). The city council could also be asked to submit a report. If the postulate finds a majority in the municipal council and is thus referred to the city council, the city council has two years to present the result of its examination.

Odermatt justifies the city council's position with the following words:

> *The motion calls for very far-reaching and detailed specifications in a structure plan, which would ultimately complicate the issue of settlement planning. A structure plan must contain a certain amount of leeway for subsequent BZO determinations and should not itself have the character of a BZO. The resources required would be very high, not least from a political point of view, because the time horizon would lead to coordination problems. From a political point of view, the required control may be understandable, but the instrument of the structure plan is not appropriate for this. The planning goals can be achieved in other ways. Acceptance as a postulate would make it possible to define a communal sub-guide plan for certain sub-areas, which would, however, never have to be as precise as the settlement guide plan called for in the motion.*

Christelle Seidler, representing the SP with the following words:

> *A communal settlement guideline plan can unfold its function where complex spatial interdependencies and land use requirements exist and other planning instruments reach their limits. At the same time, it offers the advantage that it is not parcel-specific, but is binding on the authorities. The city is under pressure; the new RPG, the revision of the cantonal structure plan and the cultural land initiative are directing settlement pressure towards the cities and agglomeration communities and belts. Densification has its price: it can trigger segregation, drive up land prices, cause unpleasant differentiations in use and negatively change the character of neighbourhoods. A municipal settlement plan has an influence on demographic, social, functional and economic developments in the city. Segregate processes can be prevented, while social, economic and ecological sustainability must be realised. The instrument of the communal settlement guideline plan can support the polycentrically functioning urban structure of Zurich, complementing the communal traffic guideline plan and the BZO.*

At the end, the motion was approved based on 70 against 50 votes and thus transferred to the city council.

A few months later, on May 7th 2015, the city council announced a 'resolution' (*«Stadratsbeschluss»*) in which they announced the municipal *Richplan*, clarifying the 'initial position' (*«Ausgangslage»*) and further explaining the medium and long-term 'development goals' (*«Entwicklungsziele»*):

> *The medium and long-term development goals of both the city of Zurich and the cantonal spatial planning concept (Cantonal Structure Plan, KRB 24 March 2014) require more extensive quantitative and qualitative densification strategies. In the context of the preliminary examination of the regional structure plan of the city of Zurich, the Department of Construction states that "area-specific planning and urban development considerations must be widely discussed and democratically legitimised at an early stage" and that municipal structure planning is "ideally suited as a process-guiding procedure".*

Two points in this resolution require more in-depth attention. First how the regional *Richtplan* is taken as 'reference point' (*«Grundlage»*) for the elaboration of the municipal *Richtplan* and, second, how the strategy for identifying 'densification potential' (*«Verdichtungspotenziale»)* draws specifically on a narrow articulation of the existing zoning ordinances and the practices regarding 'use' and 'reuse' (*«Nutzungen/Ausnutzungen*).

The call for a municipal *Richtplan* was internally debated in the AfS and within the respective working groups. Considering the previous section in which I attended one of the elaboration meetings and drawing from these motions, the whole endeavour was complicated for mainly three reasons. First, it undermines the existing zoning plan and code's function, which combines plan-making, developmental and regulatory elements. With its introduction, the epistemological foundations of Zurich's AfS were questioned; not only the relative novel ways of knowing or thinking the city by design, but the very instrumental rationality and form-based problematisation was questioned through a political recommendation. This kind of interactive governance not only shows how there are different meanings of institutional planning, but also how hierarchy (levels) perform(s) and rules need to be reinvented.

Second, it is unclear to what extent democratic steering and bureaucratic control were objectives expanded to meet the needs of citizens or politicians and how city planning –a knowing practice which deals with good city form— was losing its firm epistemological

foundation; something which had already been the case through interactive governance with an increased emphasis on coordination and comprehensive planning (during the early 1990s and throughout the 2000s). We see here a prime example where the interactive governance is not only a legitimacy crisis but also governs crisis, where mechanisms and procedures are duplicated. Traditional policy problems such as physical planning and urban development meet a series of new 'crosscutting policy' aspirations and reforms. An observation that too well resonates with Jan Kooiman's (1993:4) poignant statement, that no single actor has the knowledge and capacity to solve complex, dynamic and diversified problems.

Third, the pluri-centric forms of interaction that result from rule-intensified interactive governance lead to a pluralist model of public action, which claims and aims at articulating '*everyone's*' preferences through political influence over government policy. This rule-centric and issue-specific understanding of the formulation of public policy turns planning into a political arena itself. Something Jasanoff (2003) and Wynne (2003) have uncovered as a gradual shift from the question of democratic representation to the question of public value as policy-intervention resulting from targeted governance networks and other interactive governance forms.

These inter-governmental relations described above show how planning is not only embedded in multi-level governance paradigms, but also how planning is distributed across institutional competences and legal principles; more importantly it also shows how pressures are being accommodated and controversies delegated to lower tiers while the above set the trademark for an interactive governance. This is visible by the recent tensions between the existing zoning code (BZO) and the newly enunciated master plan (KR).

With the RPG, the debate on urban structure in Swiss cities was reignited. For Zurich, this meant the structural density debate was translated by an ever-growing problematisation of what is nationally referred to as 'inward development' (*«Verdichtung nach Innen»*); something planning scholar Bernd Scholl and colleagues define as 'problem-oriented method and compass for densification' (Scholl, Peric, and Signer 2018:221). Usually including the revitalisation of an existing built area, inward development contrasts with urban 'sprawl' (*«Zersiedlung»*). As shown by Anita Grams (2018), this is nowadays considered the main mechanism of sustainable spatial and urban planning. In the context of Switzerland, at large, 'inward development' has become an explicit objective for Swiss spatial planning since the

Federal Act of 2012. As a consequence, the cantons had to re-examine their structural plans (*«Richtpläne»)*. Not only was an increase in the area of building zones prohibited but a whole new pattern of knowledge emerged as to how better manage land resources by means of developing potentialities in existing building stocks. This, of course, also had repercussions at the municipal level. Especially in Zurich, where the planning act preceded the public exhibition of the zoning code by one year, which was severely criticised. The BZO was not only delayed and needed to be revised extensively; during city council, the SP fraction asked for the introduction of a municipal structural plan (KR) – the not-yet-existing instrument of public action aiming to approach and manage urban settlements by categorising 'action' areas.

At the municipal level, the lowest tier, land use planning is an essential 'block', which is not isolated, but embedded in a hierarchical planning structure [Figure 17]. This planning system, in which the plans of the lower levels must correspond to those of the upper level, is laid down in the Canton of Zurich in §16 PBG. It provides for four mandatory planning instruments:

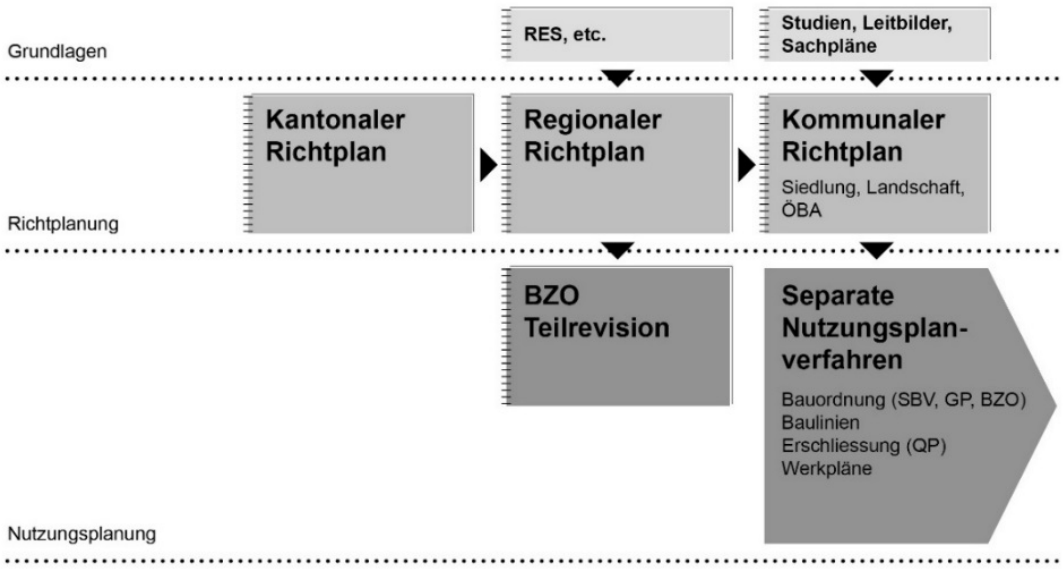

Figure 17. Interaction between various planning levels and instruments.

As far as possible, decisions are taken at the lowest level of state policy, i.e. at the level of the municipality. Only when this is not possible –in the case of spatial planning, for example, when the effects of planning cross municipal boundaries– is the task upscaled to the appropriate higher level of state policy. In return, the established hierarchy ensures mutual consultation

and participation rights, as well as plan coordination, between the levels of government and their instruments. To conduct and plan urban development is therefore a joint exercise where all entities —federal government, the canton and the municipalities— interact.

In hindsight, the vertical axis —from national strategies (i.e. *Raumentwicklungsstrategie*[60] and other *Leitbilder*, as for instance the *Raumkonzep Schweizt*[61]) to municipal land-use— serves to gradually concretise the spatial and use-related aspects, whereby they must take into account the higher-level cantonal and regional specifications. In addition, many cities and municipalities draw up a spatial development strategy, a spatial development concept or mission statement in advance at the municipal level, in which they set out the desired spatial development from the municipal perspective. This concept usually serves to define the spatial development ideas of the municipal authorities prior to the land-use plan.

To sum up, this section has shown that normative theories of good city form (such as Zurich's *Conceptual Urbanism*) are anchored in, and dependent on intergovernmental planning systems, which define and constitute the regulatory framework through which planning operates. While these intergovernmental systems aim to strengthen rules and conventions with superposing framings, they are not totalising. The vision of a 'command and control' planning is continuously intertwined with emerging values that are turned into evidence by policy or rule.

Put simply, while the previous section aimed to show how density is transformed into a set of specific principles to achieve the good city, this section aimed to show how the problem of density is handled as a holistic and regulatory approach to consolidate good urban order. Yet, in both cases, and this will be the object of the next section, the public interest is only seen as a (passive) category with planners coordinating and thinking with, visual tools, determining how to normalise (good) urban order – the common good is distributed in dialogical work; by providing new interfaces between knowledge and action.

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[60] The *Raumentwicklungsstrategie* (RES) was developed by various offices of the City of Zurich in an interdepartmental working process and adopted by the City Council on 25 March 2010 (StrB No. 549/2010). The RES shows the direction in which the city should develop in spatial terms up to the year 2025. On the one hand, it describes the successful positions of the city of Zurich; on the other, it defines sub-strategies with which the development can be steered in the desired direction. The RES acts as a central basis for the adaptation of legally binding planning instruments and the initiation of planning projects and processes.

[61] The *Raumkonzept Schweiz* is designed as an orientation framework and decision-making aid for the spatially effective activities of the three levels of government.

5.3 Normalizing urban order

«Expanding a piece of the city together.»[62]

Visiting the webpage of the SBB[63] urban development of the *Neugasse Areal*, this is the first sentence to appear. In the background, one can see an aerial view of the city of Zurich showing the area of the potential development in the foreground, next to the rail tracks and with the rest of Zurich behind.

After visiting a workshop in 2018, I started consulting their webpage and following up the urban development project a bit closer. The *Neugasse* project has received a lot of attention in the media, especially because a popular initiative tries actively to resist the urbanisation project of this area. Their slogan: *«Eine Europaalle genügt – jetzt SBB-Areal Neugasse kaufen*[64]*»* pretty much sums up their aim.

Having seen a giant Octopus meandering the streets of downtown Zurich, in protest of this development [Figure 18], I signed up on the SBB's newsletter about this specific project and registered for a workshop that centred around the aim of defining the collective uses of the Areal.

[62] Orig. in German: «Gemeinsam ein Stück Stadt erweitern.»

[63] The Swiss Federal Railways hold a real estate branch which according to the description on their website *«develops Swiss stations and adjacent sites into versatile all-round service centres and urban areas – sustainable development that plays a major role in shaping Switzerland's future. »*

[64] Own transl.: "One Europaalle is enough – let's buy the SBB Neugasse now"

The 6th and final workshop of the participatory series, invited participants to formulate requirements for uses that complement housing and suggest possible spatial arrangements in the context of the urban development concept. In focus groups, workshop participants collected issues, developed ideas and presented concrete indications with the intention defining four use clusters.

Figure 18. Protest against SBB's urban developments in Zurich

The previous five workshops collected, created, focussed and commented on collectively developing an urban development plan. Four public workshops on the development of the *Neugasse* were held between March and May 2017. The development concept was presented in Workshop 5 in November 2017. The *Neugasse-Areal* falls under the rubric *Privater Gestaltungsplan*. Technically speaking there is no need for the SBB to conduct a dialogic planning process and yet, as one of my informants told me, they did so willingly. According to her, the SBB has learned from previous errors and wants to act responsibly.

Aspects of located accountability in making density operational

On October 2nd 2018, I arrived a bit late to where the 6th public workshop took place. When locking my bike, another participant arrived and quickly parked her own bicycle next to mine. Without hesitation she asked me if I would be joining the workshop and if this was the right place. I was somewhat astonished myself, and I replied that I had just come to the address announced in the email. We chatted briefly and she immediately asked me why I was there. Short of words, I replied that I study planning processes and returned the question. She was an anthropologist but tonight "she wore the hat of a camouflaged activist" (her own words). An active member of the *Noigass* association, she deplored not only the decrease of affordable housing but argued that these public-private ways of doing planning "raise acute housing policy

questions" («*wirft wohnpolitische Fragen auf*»). Later I would find a newspaper article where she would claim that "profit-oriented housing construction is booming" (*«der gewinnorientierte Wohnungsbau boomt»*) yet, "the share of non-profit housing is rapidly decreasing" (*«der Anteil gemeinnütziger Wohnungen aber sinkt»*). Taking the *Neugasse* project as example, she continued: "if the city is content with one-third non-profit housing in large-scale projects such as the *Neugasse* area, it cannot fulfil its political duty".

At the entrance she was welcomed with a smile and her name was ticked off the list. I spelled my name, received a badge and a leaflet, and we went into a room where a man in a suit was standing and speaking on a podium. I parted ways with the anthropologist. At this event, around 50 people sat in the audience prepared to discuss various aspects of commerce, culture and community uses on the future *Neugasse* Areal.

The moderator explained the purpose of the workshop. Heavily drawing on the commonly elaborated 'urban development concept' (*«Städtebauliches Entwicklungskonzept»*), he insisted on the continuity of the planning process as an urban development concept sets out goals based on the (cooperative, in this case) elaboration of urban form principles. Stressing the cooperative and dialogic character of the planning process as a novelty in the Swiss context, he highlighted the spirit of collective responsibility and knowledge during the previous stages of the planning process. A similar point was made in the leaflet distributed at check-in, highlighting a form of urban development project "with broad public participation" (*«mit breiter öffentlicher Beteiligung»*). Accordingly, "the development process for the *Neugasse* site is a Swiss novelty of its kind. For the first time, the general public is involved in the planning from the very beginning."

With the help of a projector and some slides, the SBB project coordinator introduced this night's workshop theme : it's about functions and uses (*Funktion- und Nutzungsthemen*). The aim is to collect requirements formulated by participants regarding (ground floor) uses and their possible integration in the design plan. The agenda was set not only to define uses but also to collectively determine affordances to be considered in the further development of commercial, cultural and community uses.

Before input talks would take place, the first focus group 'collected ideas' for use (*«Nutzungsideen sammeln»*). Participants joined groups that were allocated with a specific thematic clusters, choosing one of four possibilities: retail trade, culture and gastronomy, commercial and office uses compatible with the site, and residential areas and community uses.

Figure 19 Roundtables ©SBB

Figure 20 Moderator commenting ©SBB

Figure 21 PPT Presentation & Review talk ©SBB

Figure 22 Group work thematic clusters ©SBB

Our group was assigned the topic “culture and gastronomy”. Seven people now had the opportunity to come up with ideas for different uses (*«Nutzungsformen und -arten»*). Equipped with a large DIN A1 sheet of paper, the leaflet and a map of the urban development plan [Figure 22], we started the evening’s first working step. The anthropologist encountered earlier took the initiative and started the discussion: “culture should find a place in a collection of small cultural ventures, artists' studios, workshops and free spaces for artists.” Focussing on practices and free access, she would insist that culture is a motor for any kind of community-building. Everyone agreed without hesitation but not everyone showed their consent.

In fact, the focus group not only regrouped various interests and characters, but also people with different backgrounds and motives. One person became a strong opponent of this community-building approach, instead pushing for a more environmentally-focused understanding of culture. Taking the map, this participant saw the obligation to intervene in order to offer architectural solutions afforded by his understanding of the project as part of a planning process, thus problematising culture in such a way that it needs to be integrated in building types.

Working relations started to derail thereafter not so much because some participants had no clear interests, or others were more shy in taking a steady position but more because boundaries between the various participants’ views persisted, predicated on their belief in the necessity, or lack thereof, of technical expertise.

The anthropologist with whom I entered the event was clearly of the opinion that the allocation of uses should be a matter of public efforts, whereby culture is a public and/or free good. The other person who constantly insisted on departing from the map and keeping our views close to the urban development concept would insist on the premise of technical expertise as a form of knowledge for the specification of land-uses. Less interested in the cultural practices or culinary offers, he would throw around concepts such as mixed use and speak of competences, domains and place identity. Now that I am reconstructing these relations of group work to arrive at a specification of land-uses, two aspects appear to be more than relevant. First, how two views, that incorporate a world either defined by rules and expertise, or, addressable by a practical sense of what publics are. These were, of course, not the only two views. The four other participants, including myself, had more nuanced understandings of how to locate land-uses and constitute future urban practices. Yet, these two extreme positions were detrimental in shaping the interaction insofar that the differences between the positions were driven by assumptions about who is qualified or not to act. At the end, some bullet points were added on the large paper. One person was in charge of writing down some suggestions. This kind of material practice did not intrinsically recognised the meaningful debates that took place. Integrating some aspects over others, the list provides an approximate and corrective view of many different pronouncements.

The results that were later communicated by the SBB's project team did not reflect the differences and intricacies of the participants' views and how ineffectively various positions were either committed to personal, technical or other kinds of realms. In the workshop's evaluation (*«Auswertung»*), the results from our discussion were portrayed as follows:

> *"Culture should attract audiences (from the neighbourhood and the city) and take place in the buildings as well as in the outdoor space. The sliding stage hall should be used for culture (and commerce) and not for school uses. For example, there would be room for the Photobastei. As with culture, it was said that the catering should be in the old building structure (food hall). It should be located in places with a connection to the outside space. A sky bar and a locomotive café on Viaduktplatz were also mentioned. The viaduct arches are to be continued as a "promenade" with workshops, businesses and shops with a "major highlight" (for example galleries with a café) at the end. In addition, hybrid uses are to be created in this category. The model for this is the bookshop-café Sphères. A McDonald's is undesirable."*

While none of this is wrong, this text is only a proxy of the debate that took place that evening. A sort of 'stand-in', partially translating some views into essential land-use categorisations and cultural typologies. In the absence of the discussions, relations and positions that led to some of these statements, it not only misses the obvious divide between rule and value but also

further accentuates the expert/non-expert divide, controlled by the chosen vocabulary, formats and processes of the planners' professional repertoire.

Locating land-uses, integrating issues

After the first group work, two input talks followed [Figure 21]. One recapitulated the whole process. We, the audience learned about previous processes and decisions. How the participatory planning process happened via two different types of events: workshops and discussions. How participants were directly involved through hands-on activities during workshops. How discussions were held with experts and how expert knowledge and viewpoints were shared between citizens, professionals and public officials. Now, with the urban development concept set up, the first planning phase, which is the participatory one, has been completed. Together with the complementary master plan, it forms the basis for all further planning processes such as the rezoning procedure or the call for architectural competitions. SBB will carry the results of the public participation process and the individual concerns through to implementation.

After these insights on the state of affairs were shared, a professional representative from the planning umbrella association for the Zurich region and surrounding area (*Planungsdachverband für die Region Zürich und Umgebung*; hereafter RZU) presented the study "living ground-floors" (*Studie «Lebendige Erdgeschosse»*). According to him, the desire for lively and attractive ground floors is widespread. Yet, in reality, the development and management of ground floors with public-oriented uses is proving increasingly difficult due to the structural change in the retail trade and the oversupply of ground floor space. Following his reasoning, innovative approaches are therefore required that take into account today's urban behaviour and the current everyday life of many people. The 'guideline' (*«Leitfaden»*) and 'case studies' (*«Fallbesipiele»*) that he is about to present, which is compiled on the basis of nine practical examples, makes a contribution to problematisation.

Closely following his presentation and argumentation, it was interesting to see how land-use is associated with certain everyday practices that are driven by the enchantment of urban economies and encounters. The 'cosmopolitan' liveability of streets is strongly coupled with socio-economic practices. Drawing on lessons from nine case studies, one important aspect of urban change today is slated to questions of retail and how new trends or technologies not only affect retail and business models but how these changes have an impact on city publics and

everyday practices. Driven by a strong socio-economic analysis, the speaker not only talks about the attractiveness of cities in general terms but sheds light on the elaborated guidelines that came out on the basis of their report (*«Grundlage für den vorliegenden Leitfaden»*). These guidelines present an overview which nevertheless presents 'room for manoeuvre' (*«Handlungsspielräume»*) and should imperatively be connected to and oriented with the 'locational leitmotif' (*«ortsbezogene Leitidee»*). As per their report, ground floor usage must be embedded in the overall guiding idea for it to function (*«Erdgeschoss-Nutzungen müssen in die gesamtheitliche Leitidee eingebettet werden»*).

Just as the theme of ground floor use opens onto an extended field of practices and situations, so does the term of 'liveability' (*«Lebensqualität»*). The specification and distribution of land-use functions comprises multiple constituencies beyond the technical realm of 'use', or 'utility'. For instance, the different procedures for the development and design of urban projects reveals the diverse nature of ground floor production.

The projects' findings, which come directly from practical experience, provide an insight onto the diversity and complexity of the issue of ground floor usage. In the case of the *Hunziker Areal*, a cooperative housing project known by the slogan "more than living" (*«mehr als wohnen»)*, for example, the focus was on the importance of non-commercial community spaces. In the case of Europa-Allee in Zurich it became apparent that during the long development and construction period a staggered rent structure for shops that had already opened made sense. As it is most common, in the case of clear task divisions for commercial ground floor uses among several investors, the case studies show different possibilities. In the case of the non-profit developers in *Zurich-Manegg* ground floor usage was regulated by contracts between the investors, while in the case of *Seestadt Aspern* in Vienna, a company specialising in shopping centres rents the ground floors of all investors on a long-term basis and sublets them.

These different organisational structures form, according to the speaker, specific case-scenarios, while the conscious conduct and implementation of these learnings into project-management is framed as 'strategy' and falls under the rubric of knowledge work. This way of specifying and designing ground-floor uses as an independent and interdisciplinary planning task puts the participants in the mindset of thinking through the place-effectiveness of land-use functions through ground-floor practices.

In the two subsequent group exercises [Figure 19], participants were mixed in such a way that each use cluster, as discussed in group work 1, and were equally represented in newly formed group compositions. In this new composition, the groups worked out requirements and functions for the ground floors. The task was 'to locate uses and formulate affordances' (*«Anforderungen formulieren und Nutzungen verorten»*).

Each participant briefly introduced the scope of the debate from the thematic cluster. Truly mixed this time, after the previous round, candidates could connect with the themes they were interested in and participants had more diverse backgrounds. While no one from the project team was present in the group I previously took part in, this time two members of the SBB team were part of it. While not deliberately dominating the group dynamics, positions between the participants contrasted given their familiarity with the project process and their relative preoccupation with justifying their ideas with what Haraway calls the 'view from somewhere'; a view or standpoint of objective knowledge as single perspective which claims impartiality through the affiliation with expertise. Striving to shift their view to a more situated understanding, project members were cooperative, complying with the participatory disposition of the project. Yet, the layers of mediation between each participant were suited to their professional specialisation. A picture of the urban development concept was unpinned from a corkboard. Placing it on the table, we took turns explaining previous discussions pointing towards plots or explaining the group's reasoning. My own words were an interpretation of the items listed in our previous group work. One of the participants started drawing dots on the map.

After the first round, plots were being filled with practices rather than mere functions. Some drew from examples in Copenhagen, to speak of a conceptual uniform thematic urban development project. Taking the school as the central unit, he started talking about open room schools where permaculture was at the centre of their pedagogical philosophy. This, or a similar central issue, could be not only the scope of the school but of a whole community, neighbourhood and project. Drawing on sustainable principles and implementing them architecturally and thematically. This was a springboard for speaking about place-identity. It was proposed that the former SBB depot could be used as a hall (*«Halle»*) and transformed into a café with a railway theme. This hall could be a 'multi-purpose foyer' («*Wandelhalle*») and thus integrate other uses, becoming a hybrid space suitable for concerts etc. Hybridity, more than mixed use, was a term often dropped by the participants. Another theme was introduced: creativity. Instead of focussing on office spaces, the project could be the vehicle

for the development of a more creative quarter in Zurich; somehow taking up the local identity and cultural offers proposed by the viaduct, which already attracts young creatives.

Publics places, meeting points and promenades were another topic of predilection. The idea of rail gardens (*«Gleisgärten»*) or public workshops (*«Werkstätte»*) were also thrown in. Not only was it interesting how these ideas emerged and took shape, based on the justifications and professional backgrounds presented by the participants but also how they were collected on post-it notes. At the beginning, when no one took the initiative, one of the project members offered herself to take over the task. Others started writing on post-its and sticking them on the map. The "*Wandelhalle*" and what to do with the depot and the rails was then debated by means of a drawing. Sketched on a large post-it, when it was stuck to the wall later on, it became the centre-piece. When we started discussing affordances, someone else took over the responsibility of putting down ideas on post-it notes. Our attempts to locate functions would shift to discuss more concrete situations. This expression of more situated and focussed concerns was accompanied by the map exerting a stronger agency. Less of an imaginary or speculative exercise, the discussion on affordances became one in which physical situations were discussed. The *Viaduktplatz* at the bottom left, became an issue in terms of accessibility (*«Erschließung»*). Although often debated as an entry point, functions were more difficult to allocate because within the perimeter of the current urban development plan, it is geographically closer to the Viaduct than to the Depot G which is considered the central spot of the Areal.

5.4 Making urban worlds classifiable

The superimposition of the problematisation of densification onto the distinction between rules and values, form and strategy, technical and political has the capacity to redefine the world and, in consequence, impose path-decencies of what is and ought to be public action in the name of good urbanism.

As introduced in the methodology chapter (*Chapter 4*), the ANT-pragmatist view centres on situations and practices, categories and models, and how, through these instances, perspectives get integrated, work is articulated and how value-positions become stable. From such a perspective planning prescriptions (and joint problematisations) are always the work of achievement, where certain (ethico-political) practices mobilise attachment, integration and recognition of issues through what Thompson has named 'epistemic disciplining'; that is, ways

of aligning ontologically different entities and activities beyond the specific, which implies that their relational effects hold firm across sites, situations or settings. As an implication, (prosaic) documents in the realm of planning practices not only embody normative visions of a more-than-modern, good city life, but re-constitute planning as mode of public action for an urbanism of multiple good. Rather than an representation/abstraction, these images, models and maps form a dense material-semiotic network connecting various practices, instances and values.

In the majority of cases, state systems are imagined in light of a certain 'proceduralism', that is, repetitive and rule-following practices. Procedurally correct processes comply with governmental systems. Rules prescribe processes and how documents need to be produced or exchanged between divisions and units; not only defining relations within the public sector but also engineering hierarchical relations within municipal administrations.

The first and last section have shown how visual and graphic artefacts convey significance in encounters between various activities and entities. The reason I analysed this, was to show how visualisations, models, programs or protocols are constituted by broader associations of values, contexts and seemingly disconnected issues. Simultaneously, my intention was to show how visual artefacts constitute and compose referents and meanings that reach beyond these meetings, structures and/or institutions. Models become 'object institutions' that enter into planning processes, congealing and crystallising a stream of problems over others. These artefacts are constitutive of forms of public action, which in effect co-determine the distribution of explanations of a normalised urban order, yet they depend on a larger governance arrangement that offers authentication of selected problematisations as seen in the last section.

This emphasis does not stand in sharp contrast with the normative understanding of rule-based design. As I have shown before, the specificity of certain visual representations and documents at the centre of some planning practices often relate to what Annelise Riles has named 'patterned language' (Riles 2006). From such a viewpoint the knowledge function of form is more important than content, or, put differently, meaning derives from the ways objects guide or reflect institutional and disciplinary processes. Such is the case with *Testplanung*, a method which not only becomes a reference that circulates in various political, historical and technical arenas but, because in accounting for the efficacy of its coming into being, it purports a reality shaped by the invention of particular ways of thinking, collaborating and planning the city through design, expertise and dialogue. In turn, these particular approaches have become referential processes: logics, principles, norms and rule-relationships are thus classification schemes scripted in material means.

Finally, the chapter aimed to show how publics are also relations and responses that have stabilised between internal and external practices as a concrete knowledge experience of a specialist world, where dialogue is a form that is essential to form-based planning processes. Publics are part of the communicating, visualising and *textualising* practices of planning; figures which are indexical to each planning process and design projects, either as implicit and imaginary users or as an explicit and actual audience at events, specially tailored to their experience (see also Warner 2002). In other words, the existence of a public is contingent on its categorical classification and material consideration and not on its activity. As in most planning/design practices, publics are virtual entities that are only enacted within the conceptual framework of a good urban life.

From this viewpoint, the normative understanding of urban form as constitutive element of planning knowledge is far from being a rational, rather it is enmeshed in complex arrangements where political agendas, economic aspirations and institutional capacities inform public decision-making. In the case of Zurich, this means that urban density depends on ordering devices that play a role in establishing path-dependencies between doing good and being right. Focussing on categories, plans and other *scripts* as ordering devices, I have tried to show how the planning/design nexus is anchored and problematised to achieve good outcomes. Especially through densification as problematisation turned into a set of categorisations which, through Suchman's eyes, provides those planners and urban professionals in Zurich with the resources and terms of knowing how to administer municipal urban development. That is to say, categorisations such as 'inward development', 'spatial compactness', 'retrofitting sprawl' or 'structural density' organise the activities, settings and events of institutional planning categories and frame planning practices in Zurich.

All in all, I have focused in particular on how planners deploy problematisations in the form of images, plans, maps and graphics and what these artefacts augur for furthering urban change as co-constitutive mode of public action, pointing out how typological categorisations do not lead to the design of physical arrangements but comprise both patterns and associated practices allowing for efficiency, normativity and prescription to be presented as a virtue .

CHAPTER 6.

CENTRES OF COORDINATION

Liesing, Vienna. It is the first week of September (08.09.14). We're witnessing the opening evening of a three-day long workshop. Before the evening lecture, people were introduced to the strategic intentions of the municipality. The object is a district in the southern outskirts of Vienna. Since 2005, Liesing has been designated Zielgebiet[65]; a target area. Before the evening talk, people are guided by some of the organisers. Panels and posters are displayed and brief explanations are presented. The program is posted on the door and leaflets are available at the entrance. The building, a former coffin manufacturer now reconverted into a cultural centre, is organised into separated areas: ateliers, salons and the core venue. Over the next three days, the program will consist of a variety of focus groups, excursions and evening salons. Those salons serve as a casual gathering after a long day of group– and on-site work. The workshops are framed as a bottom up. They will inform the municipal and strategic planners with local knowledge and expectations: political as much as public. In short, the event and workshops are dominated by one trope: dialogue.

This information was conferred to me by one of the project's organisers who happens to be a colleague from TU Vienna and an important informant throughout my field research. Another person who explained to me at length his experiences at this workshop was my contact point in the planning department, where I was a visiting researcher. As the supervising planner of the 23rd district, this public official was a central figure in orienting my field research. As you are about to witness, he is one of the municipal planners organising a planning retreat which informs the first section's empirical material.

[65] *«Zielgebiete»* are territories which due to their spatial condition, capacity and resources were designated by the city of Vienna as targeted urban development areas.

Figure 23. On top: Group discussion around a map on the territorial strategy for Liesing; Bottom: Brochures regarding the collaborative workshops for Liesing's development © Stadt Wien.

Public workshops, such as the one in *Liesing* are auspicious platforms to understand how city municipalities not only dialogue but promise to rationalise cities, or plan urban futures through collective experimentation on behalf of being and doing something innovative.

First, these workshops aim to align expectations. Uses of the future are as common as making reference to technical calculations. In other words, the unknown meets measurements of all kinds. These 'jumps' in time and space are common in the practice of planning: from strategic thinking to scenario-making, planning is replete with arrangements that try to close the gap between proceeding and parlance, work processes and project goals, or means and ends, such as the future. Given this, a better understanding of how newness plays a role illuminates how planning and public action is co-constitutive along the divides of expertise/non-expertise, and/or knowledge/action; and how the search for optimising and innovating public action is an alluring proposition shaping ethico-political programmes and the conduit of urban planning. Second, it is common to think of these public workshops as interfaces in which citizens bring in their views, translate concerns and not only participate but actually contribute to the legitimation making of decisions. As noted in the pre-workshop brochure [Figure 23], handed out at the event, the vice-mayor Maria Vassilakou[66]said the following:

> *Within the planning process, working on site and involving the population took on a central role. Within the framework of the Perspektivwerkstatt, a planning studio was set up in the Sargfabrik Atzgersdorf for one week. Here, intensive work was done with the public on common goals, on a common understanding for the future development of the district. The strategic plan that is now available is to form the framework for all further urban development projects in Liesing's Mitte, on which it was possible to agree together.*

But what role do the participants play in those situations and events of where planning becomes a means for dialogue? Be it as members of the audience or participants in focus groups, the public is actively invited to contribute. While the organizers do not claim to possess the monopoly over any knowledge, they still act as facilitators. The audiences are not homogeneous. Mostly represented by residents that live in the neighborhood, or district politicians, some municipal planners and a few external professionals/advisors, it is obvious

[66] From 2010 to 2019, Maria Vassilakou was also Executive Councillor for Urban Planning, Traffic & Transport, Climate Protection, Energy Planning and Public Participation (own transl.: Stadtentwicklung, Verkehr, Klimaschutz, Energieplanung und BürgerInnenbeteiligung)

that the knowledge and interests vary but not considerably. During the workshop, a variety of maps, scale models, posters, flowcharts and several other projections represent *Liesing*, Vienna or metanarratives of tomorrow's city. In this regard, it is interesting to note how various angles provide various views of the city and allow for a more omnipotent or contemplative gaze. The variety of representational techniques in addition to various communication/participation formats allows to bring certain themes to be brought closer and makes others appear further away.

This chapter aims to build up on the previous one, to inquire how city administrations perform dialogue, asking how planning plays along to ignite publics, although we now focus rather on settings/interventions than images, and thus move to another city: Vienna, Austria. Further exploring how planners want to achieve good city life, by constantly rethinking and re-articulating the divide between expertise and publics, knowledge and action, means and ends. In the previous chapter we have seen how planning operates as apparatus where documents and visual artefacts set references for how to prescribe knowledge and transfer action. Visual artefacts also stipulate the normative relations between political sub/texts and urban forms and the particular ways of planning associated with organising and designing urban development. Visual artefacts determine the technical and epistemic conventions for the practice of good urbanism, singling out, for instance, that a plot of land has to be built compactly and that a mixed use is of importance. These ontological specifics composing the language of those visual artefacts are not only shaped by semiotic epistemologies, but also mediate the bureaucratic and governmental realities that they purport to problematise, sustain and actualise.

Using projects as an entry point, the first section focuses on scenarios. Not only because scenarios shape the course of planning processes, but also because they drive and align action through the projected distribution of time and by allocating responsibilities among heterogeneous entities. Scenarios can be thought of as a condensed time-space box defined and performed by a set of objects in that world. As I will show scenarios outlive projects or workshops as sites and snapshots of reaching decisions-making. Scenarios either enacted by agendas or materialised through objects inscribe permanent visions into processes. It is interesting to note how certain scenarios or prognostics backed up by (external) numbers and other calculations that emerge out of these can become mediators for a whole new way of narrating planning.

Section two opposes deliberation as a mode of micro-political story-telling with the pragmatist inquiry into measurements and other calculation devices; not only exploring how the mundane is central to ANT's intellectual project, but also showing how an aptitude for (seemingly irrelevant) numbers reveals shifting configurations of what is good, objective and necessary planning action.

Drawing on insights from these two sections, I will show how dialogue automatizes experimental interventions and motivates trust in eventful experiences where futures shape the acuteness of the now, as in contrast to planning within projects where continuity is articulated between distributed meetings to partially fit larger organisational processes. Not only does planning depend on the ordering of projects, and the pronouncement of salient numbers, but also on providing experience by contrasting differences between past, presents and futures.

Finally, section four revisits how the idea of urban development is instigated by newness and coordinated by different valuation devices (scenarios, rankings, plans, prognostics, demonstrations or formulae) in situations of deliberation, negotiation, or experimentation, and how newness serves to problematise issues into scenarios and numbers into narratives, thus providing further sustenance for reconciling problems of the now with the values of an ethical, well-meaning and possible, if distant, future.

6.1 A City-yet-to-come

A heterogeneous group of urban experts stands around a table and discusses the arrangement of zones and plots. The workshop takes place in an unusual setting; a hotel outside of Vienna. Mandated by two developers in cooperation with two municipal planners, we witness here a so-called *Klausurverfahren*. Other people were involved: three architects, one landscape designer and me. One of my contacts inside the planning department had invited me to see how, in his words, real planning occurs. Away from the everyday bureaucratic reality of filing motions and answering endless queries, I immediately understood what he meant, when we started equipping the room. We had brought two scale models and several maps by car from the offices to the hotel. The models were from another project and the maps showed different topographical delineations. Interesting on this note is not only the physical rupture with the bureaucratic environment, but how a neutral meeting room is equipped with objects and gadgets that are aimed to make planning more hands-on, real or concrete.

After the usual introductions the next morning, the first half of the day was taken to recapitulate the location in question's historical and political background. *Rösslergasse* is an undeveloped and empty land plot situated in the *Liesing* district, a peripheral area in the south of Vienna. Part industrial, part residential, Vienna's 23rd district has seen recent developments in the past one or two decades. Amongst others these are the *Carré Atzgersdorf* or the not-yet-finished projects *In der Wiesen*: a series of urban developments planned in the vicinity of *Rößlergasse* and with the theme of promoting green and sustainable urban development. When I met up with colleagues from the TU[67] Vienna, some questioned the purpose of me following the particular developments in this district. According to one informant in particular, I was being side-lined from the important questions; those that involve real political struggle and strategic weight. I see where his reasoning is coming from given that the municipality of Vienna is full of costly and prominent urban developments like the new *Hauptbahnhof,* the *Seestadt Aspern* or the broad urban transformations happening around the *Nordbahnhof,* only to mention a few (see also Seiß 2007).

In this respect, *Liesing* might seem to be of lesser importance, not only because of its location in the periphery, but also because of the protagonists, themes, claims and interests involved. Some of my colleagues and/or informants might have a point, but I argue otherwise. What I encountered in these moments were very similar problematisations that also occur in other formats, settings or locations. Not only is *Liesing* one of the ten *«Zielgebiete»* (cf. next section), but it also draws on the scenario that sees population growth as one of the main factors to sustain and build new urban developments. An aspect which is not always popular, as I have learned during this workshop, since despite being invited no political representative from the local district showed up because apparently they feel that the municipality is pushing the development goals too much in this area, aiming to turn *Liesing* into one of its newest flagship areas.

It is not wrong that the municipality of Vienna often refers to *Liesing* as a prime example with regards to urban development. As seen during the exhibition *«Stadt Smart Entwickeln»*, a panel portrays *Liesing* as one of Vienna's two urban labs. On it, municipal planner Volkmer Pamer praises the potential of *Liesing* but plays down the role of smartness in relation to urban development. For Pamer, to develop means to acknowledge how city challenges convey new

[67] Technical University

relevancies and to adequately translate these into local dynamics. For instance, he refers to the project *«Gärteln Hoch 3»* to exemplify what he means. Not only does this project aim to adopt a sustainable approach, mimicking and integrating the figure of urban gardening into its development rationale, it also claims to be people-centred. Various reunions, interfaces and events were created to establish a dialogue with local and future residents with the idea of empowering and integrating their ideas.

It is also interesting how, in this exhibition, *Liesing* is juxtaposed with the *Seestadt Aspern* as being a smart urban laboratory (a point I will come back to in section 6.3). It is worth mentioning here in relation to how the development of new urban centres are formulated with new vocabularies and imaginaries, not only as an invocation of decentralisation or sprawl but expressed in ways that manage to give poly-centrality a positive note and pivotal role in the context of Vienna. As seen in the *Falter*[68], a Viennese magazine, this kind of urban development is framed as *«Stadtentwicklung 2.0»*. While situated at the periphery, it is supposedly different from earlier large-scale developments in the 1990s because they followed other rationales and were implemented in dialogue. Outmanoeuvring the effects so often criticised as urban sprawl, it is important to understand how city administrations cultivate a new sense of urban development by mobilising a different set of problematic deployments different from the problem-statement of urban sprawl. A problem-statement that draws back to recent and past prognoses of the city of Vienna's historical urban development. As argued by Hatz (2008), the accelerating cycles of growth, especially since the 1990s, have led to economic and political changes and the reformulation of planning paradigms that seeks the development of new urban centres. In his analysis, Hatz shows a particular type of decentralised urban development; one similar to Garreau's 'edge cities' (1991) and representative of the entrepreneurial city. Based on public-private partnerships and drawing on the idea of poly-centrality, these types of urban developments are considered satellites; or settlements that grow outside the traditional cityscape.

The morning of the workshop, various versions of *Liesing* were presented and discussed referring to cases, backgrounds and recent events. One that was shortly discussed was the *Perspektivwerkstatt Liesing* Figure 23]; a participatory workshop held within the premise of a 'growing city' (*«eine wachsende Stadt»*) and intended to 'inform' (*«vermitteln»*) and 'learn'

[68] In 2015 the Falter (20a/15) published a whole edition exclusively consecrated to urban planning in Vienna.

(*«lernen»*) through citizen engagement. As the problem-statement of the organisers goes: "In order to now steer the developments of *Liesing* under the premise of the growing city, new orientations are needed to answer questions about the further expansion of the urban infrastructure". Regarding the premise of the growing city, it is interesting how a prominent paradigm, which dominated the planning discourse in the late 1990s and 2000s is still a valid *Leitbild* today, while city administrations have become dialogic. As pointed out in many works, the rise of the urban growth[69] concept stands as reaction to the undesirable features of continuing growth through sprawl. As pointed out by Downs (2005) however, this pressure to rethink urban growth management is far from being a universal concept, yet it is often applied as such, framing the ways urban development is increasingly 'red taped' going through complete projects to include environmental impact studies etc. While Downs sees the universalisation of such principles to generate problems in urban development and policy implementation, appealing to state governments' role to become more active, it is interesting how in this case the political activity to reduce and overcome obstacles also leads to a framing where growth is a solution rather than a problem.

Back to our workshop and the hotel's meeting room; we have a similar problem-formulation drawing on the idea of urban growth as a challenge for local development. Confronted with a growing city, we have here a situation that procures the reason to develop urban land in peripheral areas due to rapid changes in population growth. As formulated in Pamer's introductory note on the workshop, there's a need to act diligently and urgently provide more housing estates. This imperative that we need to develop is interestingly described using an anti-modern language. All the workshop participants including the developers agree on the premise of breaking with existing standards of urban development, which they associate with inhuman high-rises, monotonous landscapes of asphalt, and homogeneous spatial patterns. Showing results from a design studio, the mediating architect and municipal planner both explain the importance of inserting and thinking about the project at hand in connection to its immediate urban environment, and the district's local identity. It is interesting to note how this detachment from the monstrosities of urban modernism occurs with a reformulation of the

[69] *Wachstum* in this case and context implies a direct relation between population growth and urban transformations.

problem according to new solutions; yet, the object(-ive)s, to arrive at new solutions, are not *per se* questioned, and remain largely the same as we are about to see. Taking the notion of urban sprawl for instance, which is openly reprimanded as a negative example by the invocation of a spatial pattern that has largely fragmented urban territories and led to unequal urban development. Examples like the *Donau City* are cited for their 'anti-urban' character. Under the rubric of liveable, city life in *Liesing* is envisioned to become different. However modernist deficits are only used as means to convey new approaches without problematising the strategic, political or territorial choices upon which current urban development in Vienna is still grounded. The solution everyone agrees on, is to build more inclusively, equitably and dialogically but no one actually questions why, or how, such solutions by means other than the reliability of existing processes and objects [Figure 24].

Figure 24 Klausurverfahren Rößlergasse © Erich Prödl Arch. & Julio Paulos

The next input came from the developers who showed a promotional video of another development project they promoted, focussing on liveability and painting the idea of quality of life as related to innovation and economic prosperity. The developers' standpoint is straightforward. They want to build and promote housing estates that align with contemporary and future visions of good urban living with all its diversity, innovation and life quality. Not hiding that their modes of imagining cities frames and targets particular ranges of people, they remain pretty open as to how to arrive at such objectives. As repeated on several occasions, the firms' interests undeniably follows a corporatist agenda but they are not afraid to collaborate in the planning process. On the contrary, unlike the more standardised and bureaucratic procedures known through previous developments, the two developers see this as a refreshing way to negotiate the future process of urban development. Today, urban development projects might be more complex due to the complex institutional requirements but dialogic formats have also allowed for new shared understandings to emerge.

These initial inputs were crucial as they set the tone and scene for the workshop, insofar as they provide a glimpse into how various positions and stories converge, bringing together issues and immunising other potential paths of discussion. What is decisive here is how the use of material and technological elements help frame situational expert-interactions. The workshop not only becomes a space for negotiation but forms a situated material ecology which is capable of opening up possibilities while intensifying exterior problematisations that become more urgent within these confines. Take for instance how the growing population rate entails growing needs for urban settlement and how this results in, and is used as, a framework to justify the distribution of urban development patterns. This reformulation of city growth is not employed as red tape to promote a different kind of urban development ruling, but can be described in terms of the problematic proliferation of growth valuations that rely on new vocabularies, numbers, scenarios and mechanisms, and thus enable the hybridisation of highly specific planning activities. In the next two sections we will see how growth has become a transportable scenario, helping to value certain decisions, and how this becomes a way of framing the situation to implement valuation criteria in this moment of the planning process.

These observations interestingly connect with early-ANT's commitments to the analysis of engineering projects and the whole attempt to theorise modernity's modes of ordering. In this view, the urban project is a 'semiotic-relational effect'. Not only a mode of rationality that has become part of a political project, addressing new modes of urban managerialism or entrepreneurialism, but a coordination device that is being used as a practical resource to assume a novel moment and meaning of planning cities. Such a coordination device has the possibility to be extended and potentially translate distant actors or emerging issues into its network. How the urban project and project planning rely both on its function of network configuration is as much about a particular juncture in time, space or polity, as it is about the constitutive elements that hold it together or not. For instance, if we take up the workshop in *Liesing* and the *projectness* of urban development in Vienna, the question is how it has come to be that projects now deploy participatory narratives and scenarios as being part of the good project. Providing guidance on how to communicate action or inform citizens, the good project develops what Monika Krause calls a 'logic of its own that shapes the allocation of resources and the kind of activities we see independently of external interests' (Krause 2014:4).

The importance of analysing practices in the political and organisational lives of projects acknowledges that between knowledge and action there are many intermediary objects that often remain often hidden or considered only partially important. In the next section of this

chapter, I shift the focus onto scenarios rather than projects. While scenarios are omnipresent in, and constitutive of planning, they receive little attention as modes of ordering knowledge and action. As with projects, scenario plans are tools to assess and articulate work for important practices and/or strategies. Implicit to their prospective and speculative outlook, scenarios are recognised in practice as means to define contemporary projects through strategic claims of its future.

Growth as scenario

After having lunch, all ten people were split into three groups with the idea of building models and coming up with a spatial arrangement for the future development of the *Röslergasse*. Fully equipped with materials the three groups set out to fabricate spatial figures and probe site locations with foam constructions. At the beginning, the interactions were very explorative but they were already framed by the building volume that was imposed. The developers insisted on the highest possible ratio, which was deemed impossible given the narrowly delineated area at their disposition. They then conceded a bit of the building mass in exchange for public space. If the ratio were kept, this might have ended up in high-rise towers or shadowed interstices, which no one was hoping for. Two things are interesting here: the foam, representing a certain building volume at the disposal of the participants and the already determined building perimeter. In addition to these two material frames, the discussion was constantly fuelled by the language of growth that selectively made sense of the ways this development was framed, and urged action in response to the contemporary challenges of Vienna's urban growth. Given that this was initially discussed as a process of experimentation, it is interesting how various conditions, parameters and requirements were set that would influence the properties that this urban development was going to have.

Following the initial explanations, our group started discussing strategies next to the maps that were exhibited on the walls. The architect in our group immediately started to draw intuitively on paper some schematic representations. The remaining group members were discussing what the area 'really' needed based on two maps. Our narrative was shaped by disciplinary conventions and how this project might play a role in the future of the neighbourhood. Talking about the adjacent building complex on the left side of the perimeter, which has a retail area on the ground floor, we discussed mixed use principles. Taking the walking proximity to the metro station we debated issues of mobility and multi-locality. Given the peripheral location

and the districts' 'character' we started discussing sustainability issues. Then, comparing the effects of certain approaches, we discussed future scenarios that aimed to align conceptual choices and social meaning. In all of these, we conceived, debated and projected the goals of this urban project as different scenarios discussing possible futures against the background of a desirable outcome, which was to ensure 'smart' urban growth.

The urban growth narrative in Vienna is rooted in successive elaborations of the urban development plan (*Stadtentwicklungsplan*, hereafter STEP). 'To Afford Our City!' (*«Wir leisten uns Stadt!»*) is the main title of the section where the current STEP2025 argues that to anticipate rapid urban growth, based on population growth, Vienna needs to act now. Being one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas, the city of Vienna will need to actively confront these challenges to maintain its high urban quality and socially balanced city profile. Rather than a clear path for action, STEP offers a contingent narrative whose prognosticated outcomes tell us a lot about current modes of problematic framings.

In contrast to previous STEPs, the current version does not command a univocal spatial strategy; it does offer more or less morally ambitious concepts for judging urban futures and making it applicable today. During the workshop, participants adopted this outlook almost implicitly, losing the bonds with the STEP but using its 'stories' and 'plots' to imagine what kinds of world we, and those future residents and users, might inhabit.

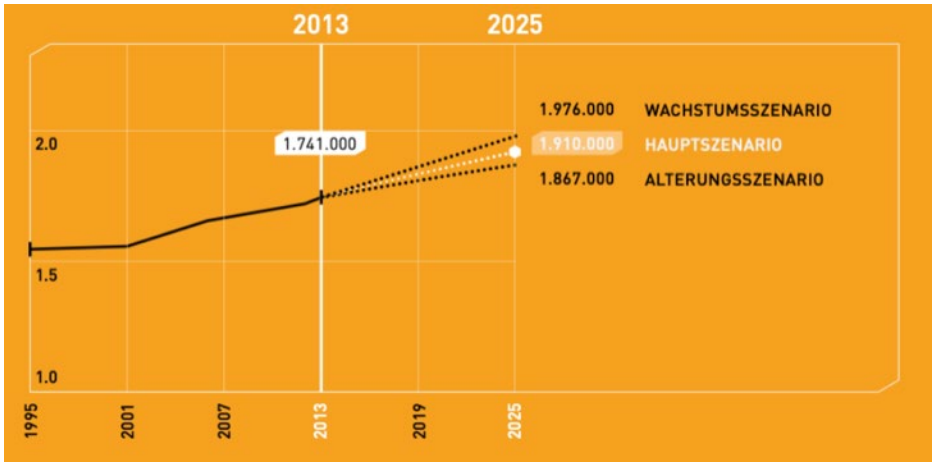

Figure 25 Growth scenario. Statistic taken from the STEP 2025 © Stadt Wien

The land-plot lies in one of the *STEP'05*s *Zielgebiete*. Due to the expected population growth, the land-plot is part of an area surrounded by other potential housing development projects. The reference to the numbers are framed as circumstance for the credibility and affordability of the project in commencement. Before turning into a 'truth-spot', that is, a place identified

through a multiplicity of circumstances and standardised into uniform units of analysis, the 'here' of the land-plot needs to be contextually and programmatically articulated: why is this a legitimate area of urban development and why does the municipality care to support private developers? The 'why' of the land-plot is not problematised as much as it is framed as ameliorant to Vienna's current urban condition. While the strategic theme of target areas comes to constantly frame the development's collective interest, other comparative practices chart similar thematic connections. At the beginning of the afternoon, the group arrived at a reframing of the problem of rapid growth by means of 'an urban virtual' — a notion coined by Jenny Robinson and which explains how multiple possibilities '*made of differential relations amongst elements, and singularities*'[70] enter our understanding of determining the specificity of urban outcomes (Robinson 2016). For instance, one of the municipal planners made a reference to another project occurring in the same area while the developers constantly compare their intention with previous housing developments. At this stage of the workshop, the land-plot remains a virtual entity but through a generative alignment between standpoints and with the connection to repeated instances of urban phenomena, the land has acquired a meaning of purpose for all participants.

As the modelling process continued, the physical handling with foam helped us organise thoughts and turn scenarios into tools. Before reaching that point we had to cut the huge foam block into pieces, which was initially a complicated moment since the block was so massive it seemed hard to project and accommodate the buildings into that narrow perimeter. We jointly decided, following the suggestion of the architect in our group, to cut them into small cubes and then once we had an idea of the spatial arrangement, we could pile up different cubes and play with heights, density and composition. In some way this was a moment of detachment from the initial parameters imposed, as the massive foam block appeared to become many little cubes and we were able to start puzzling together with much more versatility. After this instance, the various compositions and arrangements that we started to experiment with were always accompanied by projected stories that would successively eradicate the constraints that were set at the beginning.

[70] Speaking of the urban virtual, I particularly endorse the reference made by Robinson to Deleuze's exploration of *Difference & Repetition* (Deleuze 2015) which implicates that we associate multiple possibilities into a singular outcome.

In contrast to more utopian or strategic approaches, we started situating the normative language of urban growth with a series of selected urban phenomena. Our communication base having considerably improved, we would now much more easily associate social diversity with public space, or translate mixed use housing into sustainable solutions. Since we were manipulating physical models and superposing various forms of measurements (i.e. Population Growth, Building, Volume etc.), it did not occur to us that we were expressing urban qualities though quantification. Or, to put it otherwise, to us this alignment seemed very logical since it produced in our group a common-sensual implementation plan supported by a model in the making. Connecting this with a range of scenarios, we composed and compared various spatial arrangements to inform our best choice about how to develop for the imagined future of the urban project. In a nutshell, the scenario we came up with pursued multiple goals including the momentarily inclusion of diverse audiences in order to improve plausibility and social cohesion. This was not only a way of reducing bias but also of transforming, adjusting and performing the scope and aim of our project rationale.

Without having been to the field as a group, the field gained believability and persuasiveness in a different way by being made 'artifactual' via presentations, previous interventions, photo essays and a range of maps pinned on the walls. While going to the field, to examine reality, is often understood as an essential part of claiming authority for a decision, the site in question was transported into the workshop by other means, already 'de-composed' before being supplanted as a truth-spot, a notion coined by Gieryn (2006) and to which I will come back to later. It is important to remember how the peculiarities of a site become more than just a physical location where rezoning is about to occur. Creating a situation in which location and local specificities are referents of analysis and ratifiers of authenticity.

Towards common forms of measurement

Reaching a spatial arrangement which seemed to display the ways we configured and situated various conceptual plots, we started to translate the 3D constellation into 2D drawings. This jump seemed abrupt as we went from grand shapes and concepts down to a series of sketches. Yet, these procedures were reversible and reproduced on several occasions, on the one hand visualising height and volume, while on the other inscribing and delineating allotment perimeters within the already circumscribed project perimeter. Going back and forth, our group started adjusting our aggregated scenario by a gradual process of zooming in and doubling

particular spatial arrangements that we would label typology. This translation from one material —polystyrene— to another material —paper— accelerated and multiplied the visualisation process. The two-dimensional sketches, although reinterpretations of the various constellations and compositions of the foam cubes, led us to discuss other site conditions such as the greening of public spaces and the uses of place. These visual moves and gestures without reference to the parameters and conditions imposed at the beginning were sustained by our commonly elaborated argumentation plots and the growth scenario in which development projects in Vienna should be placed. Whenever someone needed to argue to build more, to diversify more or to green more, she or he would back up their argument in reference to the growing city and the solution that this project would offer. The previously described moves were thus always accompanied by a reframing of the problem of growth that needs to be solved.

Figure 26 Klausurverfahren Rößlergasse © Erich Prödl Arch.

This succession of moves onto paper allowed a new coming into existence of qualities. Reassembling the properties into a new set of parameters, we as a group, intensified a particular direction for the formation of this housing estate and the implications of urban redevelopment. Beyond the highly specialised and localised architectural adjustments, complex linkages were forged between implementation, agendas, strategies, prognostics and various other intermediaries. Far from providing a general form of technological zone, which Barry explains as being a space within which differences between technical practices, procedures and forms are reduced as for the establishment of common standards, we have here a sort of reinterpretation of a studio space. Common forms of measurement are not achieved so as to establish standards between different locations but the studio is an experimental space for cultivating speculative uncertainty related to the capacity of socio-material framings.

This heterogenous stitching together between relative positions and different specialities through inter-active associations is only possible because of the controlled environment. During the second part of the day, three groups were formed. Each group was responsible for

fabricating a scale model[71], mimicking an architectural competition [Figure 26]. This way of recomposing the area into an urban development project was determined by one key requirement which was the site density. A number was set as a requirement by the developers. This ratio was then translated into a construction volume; each team received one block of polystyrene with the corresponding mass which would need to be placed into the perimeter. All three teams could now experiment with designs, sketches and concepts which they would come up with. The sole condition for the (friendly) competition: define uses, identity and accessibility. Such a studio space is also promoted by the municipality of Vienna, which introduced two new types of procedures in order to facilitate cooperative planning procedures: *Atelierverfahren* and *Klausurverfahren* [Figure 27].

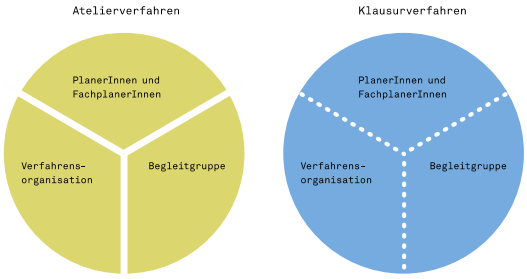

Figure 27. Kooperative Planungsverfahren. Zwei Modelle © Stadt Wien

This being a *Klausurverfahren* it is interesting to have a closer look at the etymology of the two designations. According to the *Langenscheidt*, a German-English dictionary, *Klausur* can be translated as 'test' or 'exam'. Using the same dictionary, 'atelier' is translated as 'studio'. The difference in practice between both procedures in the context of Vienna is determined by the component of time. While a *Klausur* is usually practiced over short but dense periods of time, as in this workshop, the *Atelier* is a procedure that stretches over several months. According to a *Werkstattbericht*, the aim is to have more dialogic and engaged planning processes.

As experienced through this workshop, one aspect that seems particular to the *Klausur* is not only the *placelessness*, but also the kind of consequence-free situation that is conveyed by the experimental interaction of fabricating a scale model and mimicking a friendly architectural competition. Not only are these practices of probing and testing very explorative, they are also performative in the abrupt recreation of invented objects in changed modes and logics. On the last day of the workshop, based on the 'winning' scale-model that was selected during the evaluation procedure, two types of transcriptions occurred. First, the scale-model that won (our

[71] Regarding scale models, it is not only how the participants convey ideas through objects but how they situate each building, how they delimit what is a green space or a housing unit redirecting certain possibilities and commuting roles, or imagining and moving between different kinds of reality. Manipulating sketches and models and putting them into forms then leads to a materialization of concerns with the stability of the materials; a point interestingly illustrated in a conversation on *maquettes* between Hennion and Farías (2015:79)

group), was sketched on paper. Second, it was digitised and projected on the wall to for debate. Third, it was printed out on A2 size and placed in the middle of the table.

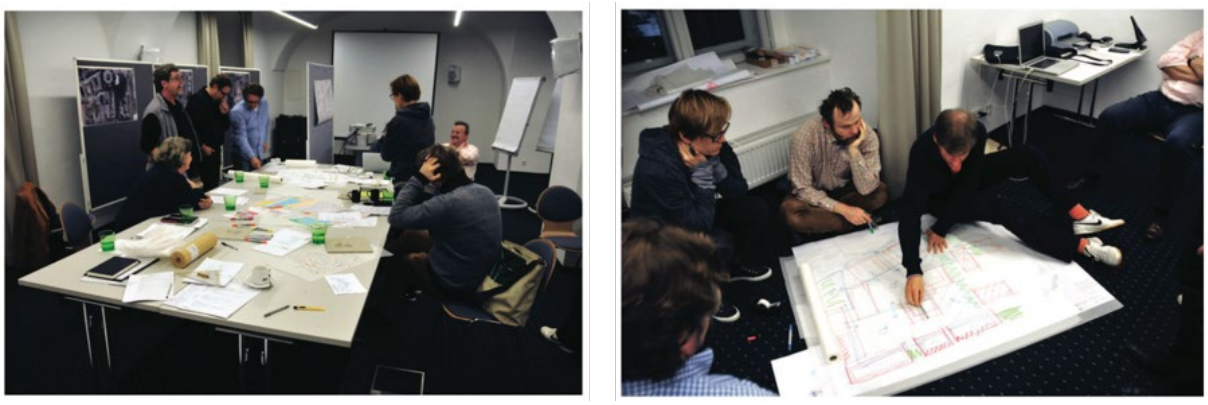

Figure 28 Klausurverfahren Rößlergasse © Erich Prödl Arch. & Julio Paulos

None of the three models was kept as such but one idea was used as generative reference, while another envisaged possibilities that were only integrated if they were captured as important during subsequent discussion. Progressively statements were recomposed into values, rerouting associative pathways between numbers, uses, identities and accountability. Animated by the ambition of composing new visions of urban progress, the planners and other participants are trapped in a parallel world that sets down its own conditions of intelligibility due to the expressive mediums (projects, agendas, etc.) it uses. The creativity of urban design is limited. First by the constraints initially posed by numbers and subsequently by the structuring of generalisations. The workshop, after all, is part of planning processes that not only conveys urban development by governmental order but is also as an 'empire' of expertise. This is not to say that meetings and workshops are just passage-points expressed in a composition of sorts, but that the partiality of their ordering only becomes evident as order that favours urban values alienated by the circumscription of modern facts, procedures or institutions.

Providing a space for intimate engagement with materials, the *Klausur*, much like the studio or laboratory, is a separation from the outside world and a controllable environment in a procedural sense, whereby things behave in the ways protagonists manipulate them. The difference between rule and value orders not only becomes blurred, but these spaces help immunise certain rule-frames while allowing for the intensification of other modes of (public) valuation. Of particular significance here is not the process of creating or transcribing, but the ways in which (public) values push scenarios which help to develop and establish collectively

new measurement approaches to reduce the indeterminacy of the urban physical realm of a development project. The groups employ criteria for characterising quality within testing practices that are external to the workshop proceedings. While growth is a criteria measured in numerical magnitudes it performs as value helping the various protagonists to argue, compare and justify their reasoning. With a variety of tests and scales, the procedural spatial adjustments are configured against and applied to a wide variety of hypothetical urban phenomena [Figure 28]. What is important here is how these values are probed and that these measurements set the initial conditions and parameters which become increasingly abstracted to suit the purpose of projecting test scenarios into specifications that reflect more general municipal strategies and modes of public action.

Throughout this episode, it was more than revealing how the re-composition was not only justified by the epistemic basics for architectural practice but also by the displacement of two sorts of measures into urban orders and values. First, styled as development responding to a municipal framework strategy and, secondly, by simulating various models under pretty rigid conditions. This epistemic and ontological reassembling around the making of models and valuing of indexes, in which design practices are collected into specified facts for plan-making, constitutes a first step in the instantiation of urban order as characteristic truth. It is interesting how this workshop presents a space for experimentation, where speculation about futures rests on the very intention of playing out alternative visions, while in the end, the programmes that report about those meetings remain contained by the political-economic ordering of generalisable and replicable knowledge optimisation. In some way, what we have witnessed here could be referred to as the "technological zone" (Barry 2006), a space which allows for different technical practices to take place due to common standards that are established by framing procedures and forms. These spaces allow for **(i)** the development of common forms of measurement, and **(ii)** moments of qualification when practices and objects are assessed according to common criteria. In effect, these workshops depend on these relations unfolding with other entities including long-term municipal strategies.

6.2 Future-informed urbanism

Sitting in a half circle, a group of six urban experts are debating the future of Vienna during a roundtable[1].Themes range from carbon-free mobility to social cohesion and the politics of participation. The backgrounds of the different speakers couldn't be more different; occupying

the chairs were Vienna's planning director, a mobility researcher from the TU, a council representative from the city government, an architect-professor from the UdK[72] and a journalist [Figure 30]. Moderated by another journalist, they were asked to speak about how the European city of the future should look. Organised between the city administration and the *Architekturzentrum Wien* (hereafter AzW), the event is part of an interview series led by this evening's moderating journalist. Aiming to collect a vast amount of knowledge on the 'new urban age', the journalist started a series of talks exploring how, in contrast to the vertical cities of modernity, can we plan and imagine the urban society of the future? One of the suppositions for the future of cities, as written by the moderator's editorial piece, is to counter rapid urbanisation with equitable and sustainable approaches.

Drawing on the *«Baukulturreport»*, the organization of the event issues from the conviction that the purpose of building is to create living space and development opportunities for people, which is ultimately what all city building must be measured against. Questioning how planners, architects and designers can contribute to a European city of the future, which is envisioned as liveable and humane, sets the agenda for this event. Against this background, most speakers highlight the importance of scale as an important issue or suggest that good urban living is a matter of producing enough public space. In the spirit of Jan Gehl, the TU professor evokes the case of Amsterdam or Copenhagen to illustrate how bike lanes not only reduce motorized transportation, but actually offer a solution to transition to more carbon-neutral cities. Not only is the future a polysemic and open repertoire to discuss various best case practices from elsewhere, it is also gets associated with progress, innovation and technological change.

Framed as an information event, it is interesting to observe how this roundtable represents a space to assemble audiences and replicate ideas about an unknown future. First, next to the entrance [Figure 31], various brochures are laid out on a table offering free exemplars of the newly issued STEP2025 and the Smart City Framework strategy. Another point, which leads me to make such an observation, is how various posters in the background reveal expectations of what to prepare for and project the city's future. They read *«Wien! Voraus»* ('Vienna forward') and are part of the municipal campaign to 'rethink good planning for the city of tomorrow'.[2] A third point that in my sense intends to disseminate ideas by assembling audiences is the very organization, nature and objective of panel discussions.

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[72] Universität der Künste Berlin

The main objective of this kind of event is to promote an idea of the city where novelty appears the solution to the indeterminacies of future urban development; depending on the successful implementation of technology only if accepted by the people who inhabit and co-constitute the city by means of organizational practices. Through the repeated use and formulation of concepts and problems, this particular assembly brings together contributors that promote and celebrate new horizons of citizen engagement and participatory innovation.

Uncertainty about the city of the future and how to plan for it is made more acceptable through the introduction of values. The moderator asks the speakers to react upon the fact that in 2050, three quarters of the world's population will inhabit cities. A common reaction is that the city of the future is as much inclusive as it is digital. Of crucial significance here, is not only how expert panels become a verbatim support for expert knowledge, through the heterogenous composition of their participants, themes and perspectives, but how these settings and instances help disseminate and coordinate information and enrol publics. In front of an audience which was invited to ask questions at the end of the debate, each protagonist seemed to deal with the complexity of a future unknown differently and yet they increasingly relied on similar tools (and imaginaries) to exert their expert knowledge.

An interesting way to reframe uncertainties is thus by hybridising technology and citizenship and, more importantly, by projecting current issues as amenable through solutions into a more distant present or proximate future.

The 'intelligent' city in rankings

In response to a question on inclusive urban growth and where to situate the extended urbanisation of *Seestadt Aspern* in the context of Vienna's city-wide development goals, planning director Thomas Madreiter makes an interesting point on urban growth in the face of innovation. For him, it is not so much about imposing certain strategic rationales anymore, as we used to be the case in more technocratic approaches to planning but instead it is about acknowledging the challenges and circumstances that the city of Vienna is facing. Insisting on the pressing issues of population growth, he nevertheless affirms the importance of dialogue in addressing urban development. Growth here plays a double role. Not only is it a modern fact connected to material circumstances as set by the STEP, it is also a means of stabilising a shared understanding of urban life through a 'forward look'. Drawing on what has retrospectively happened, the planning director constructs an idea of the European City that is

merely a forward projection of technological expectations. This explanatory mechanism is replicated all evening long by different interlocutors in various capacities. Reinforced by overarching ideas and mostly framed in relation to agendas, rankings or numbers, broad claims are made that are widely shared among the participants. In other words, the city in all these interactions is about assessing and connecting current problems with future solutions.

Madreiter's response and the alderman's reaction are emblematic of this. According to the planning director's predictions, *Seestadt Aspern* is a city which develops in harmony with the way technologies develop. Not only is it this accomplished via participatory processes that ensure innovation*, it does so to offer intelligent solutions that a city of the future should provide. For instance, the *Seestadt* is seen as a car-free city; *«nachhaltig mobil»* ('sustainably mobile') is one of the key expressions often repeated in this round of statements by the planning director. These kinds of vocal interventions, such as the mentioning of the *Aspern Mobil Labor* are praised and generally approved of by the other speakers as well as the audience because they refer to a clear solutions. This kind of framing is not a call for hope where proximate futures are taken to bring in values to justify current interventions, but it becomes a resource to effectually perform and actualise 'situational frames'. The actualisation of futures, innovation and dialogue in the planning director's statements not only depend on the constant adjustment of strategies but also on the adjustment of the world to his statements.

Madreiter then makes an interesting point regarding how rules are suspended if dialogue ensures more quality. This echoes a statement he made during another event, and which is more explicit about the purpose of *STEP 2025*, specifically its innovative approach in comparison to previous versions.

> *«The City of Vienna does not plan without reason. I.e. as a rule, projects are qualitatively developed in dialogue with important stakeholders - including the project applicants - and brought to implementation maturity.»*
>
> *—Thomas Madreiter, Vienna's Planning director*

According to the planning director, city planning is less about the implementation of rigid rules, but a dialogic process which occurs with the help of different stakeholders to guarantee quality.

> *«In this context, the new urban development plan STEP 2025 is an instrument to provide up-to-date answers to current questions. It contains less concrete measures of where and what will be built, but rather a vision of the Vienna of the future. Against the background of the commitment to a participative urban development and urban planning, STEP 2025 is itself the subject of a broad and intensive dialogue process with politics and administration, science and business, citizens and the public.»*

Reflecting the motto *«Courage for the city!» (Mut zur Stadt)* not only conveys an approach to urban change through a set of values and normative guidelines, but one which seeks to establish a planning agenda as resource and investment strategy for future viability.

> *«STEP questions established processes and offers starting points for optimised procedures and effective instruments. Dynamic urban and location development requires increasingly rapid decisions in many areas. At the same time, however, as many interests as possible should flow into decision-making processes and lead to broad-based consensus. Against this background, governance becomes a key concept.»*

This not only clarifies how Vienna aims to achieve good city life which relies on the equilibrium between rules and quality, but also one which performs strategies and visions in relation to values that are understood as bringing innovation.

Previous *STEP*s have produced implementation strategies and defined 'target areas' (*«Zielgebiete»*) while the latest urban development plan defines what the planning director and vice-chancellor have called visions or models; the centrality of visions as explicit expressions of urban development complement existing strategies [Figure 29]. The continuity lies in the juxtaposition of visions and qualities to maps and measurements stabilising an ontology that combines both aspects into workable forms of knowing and enacting the city. If we take the current STEP, which builds on the previous ones, the specifics of the latter come with its incalculable character as for instance the political orientations for the STEP invigorate in order to produce 'a liveable city' (*«eine lebenswerte Stadt»*):

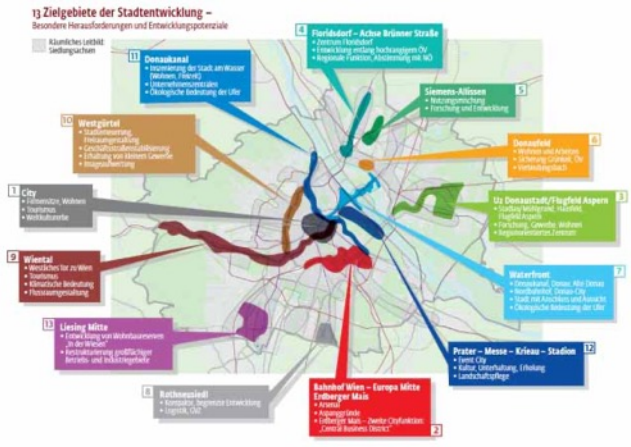

Figure 29. The 13 target areas of urban development @ Stadt Wien

> *The aim of urban expansion is to create coherent city districts instead of planning on a plot-by-plot basis. We strive for mixed, lively and developable city districts, of high architectural-cultural quality, with streets and squares as meeting zones and lively ground floors.*

> *Vienna is a city where people want to live. The tradition of municipal and subsidised housing ensures social mix, affordability and a high quality of living and will continue to play an important role in urban growth in the future.*

> *The preservation and creation of high-quality open and green spaces is an outstanding task of politics. They are of existential necessity for recreation, leisure and ecological diversity. Extensive greening of roofs and facades as well as trees and avenues can have a mitigating effect on the consequences of climate change.*

What is interesting here is how past futures, or the future as it was once represented, come into action and how these prospects shape how planning works now. This concern for the future of the city as an entity comes up through other passages and situations:

> *«The STEP defines which goals are to be pursued in the public interest, lays down basic attitudes and develops governance models or institutional structures to ensure the preservation and active pursuit of these goals even in new forms of cooperation with non-public actors.»*

While these expressions might appear random, they nevertheless indicate a concern with how planning needs to rely on regulatory mechanisms while equally providing normative frameworks. Increasingly invested in making sense of the future world, city planning attends to the new by relating and filtering existing regularities. Without undermining or highlighting them, new grammars of innovation come to complement and extend the ways of knowing and applying rules. It is astonishing to note is the emphasis on the pursuit of goals requiring cooperation, echoing in some form a certain generalisation about how to conduct planning processes as dialogically.

The alderman then comes back to the idea of 'sustainability' (*«Nachhaltigkeit»*) briefly introduced by the planning director in order to support the validity of intelligent solutions only if meeting the requirement of collective action. For him collective action is a core element of urban governance, and future knowledge has a relevant role in shaping emergent good city life conditions as in constant dialogue. Part delegation to the future, part a structuring effect of his own argumentation mechanisms, the alderman constantly draws on the importance of 'real-

life' laboratories. Expanding on *Seestadt Aspern*, but also taking the *Mahü* as an example, the alderman explains how innovation and dialogue are requirements to produce inclusive urban growth. Aligning expectations of collective action with a technological world picture that ought to represent what counts as 'real-life', the alderman wants to reduce the tensions that come with either one of the two modes of action. This double sense of intelligence as he continues ––of the city and the people— is a key aspect of the governance logic that the city of Vienna aims to unfold. A logic all too prominent in political statements which aims to humanise the *technicization* of urban everyday life with a highly imbricated understanding of intelligence as social interaction.

As the conversation intensifies, a series of problems get framed and assessed on the idea of 'liveability' (*«Lebensqualität»*). Heavy car traffic or extended urban sprawl for instance are counter-framed through novel concepts such as carbon-free urban systems or poly-centrality; these concepts also get associated with public values and expectations of good urban living. What is of interest here is how these lines of argumentation are performed. Far from happening independently or 'in the wild', statements seem to be only valid in reference to institutional 'tools'.

Here, the roundtable interlocutors increasingly share their knowledge positions on how to guarantee a good urban life through reference points external to their capacity as experts. A way of arguing liveability happens in terms of rankings for instance. To demarcate how Vienna is valuable, the interlocutors understand the success of Vienna in rankings to offer a reference about which one can be certain. This is unsurprising since Vienna has been unanimously leading quality of life rankings for the past decade. Seeing here at play the authoritativeness and agency of rankings is one thing but seeing how they unfold to involve, create and stabilise an audience requires further assessment and this is the actual point I want to stress.

Figure 30 Expert Podium ©Stadt Wien

Figure 31 Brochures and leaflets at the entrance ©Stadt Wien

Figure 32 Poster fixed on the entrance door from the inside ©Stadt Wien

Figure 33 Audience ©Stadt Wien

Apart from the planning director, other people (the city council, the academic, the journalist) identify what makes Vienna extraordinary by providing information about the city that not only tends to assess its qualities, but places it in competition with other cities. As a consequence of their assessments, the interlocutors not only simplify their reasoning in relation to singular ratings, but they aim to offer a description of the world-to-be-built that lies ahead of them as experts and of us, as the audience, in a two-fold sense. As such, statements do not resemble prophecies but they follow paths according to the performativity of rankings. Most importantly though, these paths relate to audiences. To audiences present during the panel discussion, but also to audiences imagined as future residents and articulated in statements about car free cities; an audience which is resilient and smart, and audience composed of bike-users, pedestrians and eco-friendly citizens.

To this end, it is interesting how indicators and numbers both have qualities. Population growth, rankings and surveys generate objectivity and expectations at the same time; not to the point of establishing a universal law of good urban living, but to the point of being valid upon performance as technical or political tools (for experts). Beyond the unmistakable power of numbers and how they shape. Modernist culture, the use of numbers here is quite different from the one that aims to establish a domain of objectivity. Rather than a *technicization* of politics, or a becoming public of facts, we have here an ordering of concerns that stabilises practices by invoking publics as value(s). Seen like that, the roundtable is a space that cultivates a certain transgression of norms, but always with reference to existing challenges, case-specific objectives or institutional tools. On the one hand, references are made to global challenges that inform the lines of reality on which to work on, while simultaneously preaching that the key elements of achieving intelligent future urban environments relies on a high capacity for collective action via dialogue, learning and innovation.

Agendas as political gesture

A particular moment that created unanimity in terms of expectations was the reference to the newly introduced the 'conceptual guidelines' (*«Fachkonzepte»*) from the STEP2025. During a moment of vivid frictions, with the audience reacting to a lack of guidelines for public places [Figure 33], the alderman referred to the *«Fachkonzepte»* as the means by which public space would be regulated consistently from now on. Directly answering the provocation, the alderman specified that these conceptual guidelines were to be more than recommendations

but ought to establish a new culture of intervening and remaking the interstices of the built environment. Per definition, these specialised concepts are extensions of the objectives and visions formulated in the STEP2025. Consequently, new specialised concepts are to be developed. They represent 'immersions' (*«Vertiefungen»*) and should help guide planning processes in the future. For the record, the initial version of the STEP2025 had three concepts; today four more have been formulated and established. Each of them problematises how to envision and pursue initiatives of good urban living.

Reacting to a follow-up question, the alderman stressed the productive potential that comes with the gesture to collectively formulate and test these novel modes of action. The gesture the alderman invoked was particularly telling as he insisted on the potentiality rather than the outcome. The prospect of having more public and green places is somewhat more important in his statement than an actual implementation plan, which bewildered some of the audience but nevertheless created a common ground for discussion. At the same time, other experts in the roundtable reacted and started discussing the importance and value of public places; others referred to it by its importance as an architectural model, highlighting a number of ways in which places fulfil the purpose of connecting people. In a sense, the evocation of this specialised knowledge becomes a gesture more than a term, creating the expectation that it will produce a broad base of knowledge and be seen as an all-encompassing solution to a variety of future problems.

Linking the scope of these specialised concepts to the idea of 'public interest' catalyses the formation of more accentuated problematisations that mediate certain values over others. Urban public places not only become represented by their characteristic material features, so as to create a discourse in favour of sustainability, they are also a governmental conduit through which specific political, scientific and technological proposals interact with specific urban, societal, policy and architectural ambitions. Here the academic expert with a background in infrastructure and mobility stands out as he, without further acknowledging the specific concept, draws on the exemplary status of the redesign of the *Mahü* as a case in point of reattributing public spaces to the use of people; an example of sustainable urban infra-structuring and living as he claims. In this regard, de-motorising the city is an obligatory step towards more equity, sustainability and technology, he continued. Mobilising examples from elsewhere and comparing it to the relevance of the public interest, this expert engages with the framing of a science-society and policy-technology relation that only confirms and further stabilises the specificity of a concept mentioned by the alderman and which has not yet been

consequently implemented or conducted in practice. Without further introduction, the concept as gesture and conduit are reinforced mediating new modes of action that can be linked to a 'public interest'.

As a tool of municipal planning and city government, these specific concepts have proven adequate in various ways to sustain a notion of great participatory and technological potential in envisioning the future of Vienna. Alongside more established municipal planning instruments and topics that tackle issues of land-use, housing or mobility, the introduction of the public place concept has been consequently shaping the ways of collectively thinking about urban planning as mode of public action. Not only is this visible through the perpetual reproduction of this initiative in various outlets, like the exhibition *«Wien 2025 – Im Dialog Stadt entwickeln»*, it has also formed the argument of many political interventions (see next section). In a *Werkstattbericht* on this specific concept (Nr. 175; 2018), the importance of public place is justified by its means of offering qualities and answering problems. Planning here becomes a matter of accommodation and collective aspiration, rather than a strategic rational process progressing in a linear fashion from idea to outcome. The specific organisation of this event, with the intention of debating the future of cities is based on a format through which governmental objectives can be replicated. Departing from larger societal issues and unknown urban phenomena, the many references to existing urban development operations and projects, which are considered to be the linear outcome of planning conduits and that can be indexed by ratings, extend, display and stabilise the legitimacy of planning as mode of public action.

To sum up, the roundtable can be seen as part of an effort to debate, perform and disseminate the plans 'in dialogue' with a technological urban future yet to be resolved, reminding us of indexed tools and introducing novel regulatory concepts for the government of urban futures. Put otherwise, the roundtable is a manifestation of governmental attempts to reinvent technocratic expertise as public intervention, and an envisioning of the unknown as a category and a value in new ways of doing planning as public action. The modes of interaction taking place throughout the podium discussion, and the results of these expert panels, constitute new objects of qualifying urban development simultaneously translating newly pronounced shared matters about which it is possible to agree, or disagree. This way of rethinking planning through dialogue becomes delineated and actualized through urban futures and the municipal agendas projecting problematizations that not only render population growth visible in order for it to be

given value, but also deem dialogic urban development to be necessary. The reference towards measurement, such as prognosticated population growth or international rankings, give substance and political meaning to expectations of urban planning in the context of Vienna. Similar to the workshop in section one, municipal agendas (and the whole institutional agendas that accompany it) act as 'meditating instruments' (Miller 2004); a notion introduced by Miller to explain how certain objects allow for easier coordination, or comparison to take place. The modes of interaction taking place and the effects of these podium discussion then constitute new forums of qualifying development, simultaneously translating these into matters about which it is possible to agree, or disagree.

Thus far I have suggested that dialogic planning is not only the answer to the legitimation crisis as formulated by planning theorists but is of importance for understanding the struggles of representative democracies to achieve good public action. Deliberative and constructivist accounts themselves, however, raise problems that need be addressed otherwise.

6.3 Experiencing urban newness

Equipped with shovels, a woman and three men in suits place sand into a pile. *Spatelstich*, also as known *groundbreaking* in English, is a ceremony usually celebrated on the first day of construction for a project. We are at the junction *Mariahilferstraße/Neubaugasse* in Vienna. Later the vice-mayor, Maria Vassilakou, will speak of a dream come true. Standing opposite, amongst a mid-size crowd, I am mostly following a discussion in which some self-proclaimed residents vehemently disapprove of the transformation of the *Mahü*. Gesticulating vividly, the residents express their displeasure; mobility, accessibility and other issues are stated. This is just a 'pipe dream' (*Hirngespinst*) of the vice-mayor. From the other side of the crowd, another bystander yells something inaudible. The crowd's applause follows imminently. The next day I'd type *>Spatenstich Mariahilferstraße Vassilakou<* into my computer's search engine. Clicking on the first article, I started reading about the "resentment and joy"[73] of people with regards to this project and the controversies it has caused. Generally speaking, and this is also the conclusion of the many media reports, such initiatives are welcome. After all, the redesign of public infrastructure is an attempt to achieve better conditions of urban life and dwelling. At

[73] https://kurier.at/chronik/wien/spatenstich-fuer-die-neue-mariahilfer-strasse/66.322.129

the same time, we can observe here an objection to a development that is perceived as unpleasant to those working and living in this area; an opposition often characterised as NIMBY and which came through as very pronounced during the 'civic survey' (*«BürgerInnenumfrage»*) exerted by the municipality.

The majority of the population would like to see more green spaces and seating areas, as well as the emergence of a new open space (*Freiraum*), 'which would contribute to a better quality of life in a dense city' (*«der für mehr Lebensqualität in der dicht verbauten Stadt beiträgt»*). At the same time, people seem worried about mobility and accessibility issues after this area has become pedestrianised.

During her inaugural speech, Vassilakou extensively described the dialogic planning process. According to her, it was an innovation in the context of Vienna not because of its essence but for its truly participatory innovation and the many forums which were organised to achieve this aim, of being more dialogic. Vassilakou mentioned the survey, the newsletters, the website and a temporary exhibition. In particular she highlighted the implementation of a *Dialogue Box* that culminated with a three-day event named *der Proberaum*. Going back to 2011, with the new red-green political coalition in place for less than 6 months, Vassilakou speaks about the challenges and the requirements to be participatory in relation to the growing affordances of an expanding city.

A statement which resonates with her introductory note in the *Werkstattbericht* (Nr. 143; 2014)

> *As the city grows, so do the different demands and thus the spatial requirements*[74].

The quest for more place is a collective issue:

> *Actively helping to shape this open space was open to everyone, as the population was invited to "jointly design" the new Mariahilfer Strasse.*[75]

[74] Orig. « So wie die Stadt wächst, wachsen ebenso die unterschiedlichen Ansprüche und damit auch der Platzbedarf. »

[75] « Diesen Freiraum aktiv mitzugestalten stand jedem offen, denn die Bevölkerung wurde zu einem gemeinsamen Gestalten der neuen Mariahilfer Straße eingeladen. »

Part of the new governmental coalition's ambitious program to conduct urban development in dialogue, the *Mahü*, is thus a telling case, not only for how it shows how urban audiences are integrated in planning processes but also with regard to how various publics are deployed and treated in the communication and demonstration of urban problematisations. In the following two sections, we are about to witness how planning is instrumental in conveying dialogic and participatory innovation and address a wide range of complex city challenges beyond the conventional practices of technocratic and public regulation. Two things will emerge as striking: how recursive forms of planning are proponent to bring novelty and 'solutionism' into context, and how, as it becomes embroiled in dialogic formats, planning is a means/medium to deploy, tailor and customise existing local government agendas into collective forms of experience, experimentation and issue-articulation.

Visioning variations around urban innovation

From 12.02 – 07.03.2015 a temporary exhibition was organised to present a practical overview of the proceedings of the *Mahü* redesign. Under the title: *Design und Gestaltung*, the aim of the exhibition was to inform those interested in the project [Figure 34]. Not only did the exhibition focus on the participatory procedure, it also exposed various thematic panel arrangements. Experts (i.e. architects, planners and landscape designers) were there to guide visitors through the exhibition. As indicated in the exhibition pamphlet, the core ambition was to make the visitors feel past impressions and experience the future development of the street.

Figure 34. Exhibition announcement © Stadt Wien

The exhibition is centred on displaying information via images. Large-format, floor-to-ceiling visualisations gave visitors the impression of standing directly on the new *Mariahilfer Strasse*. The use of images and in particular visual renderings of the street's urban transformation is a way of envisioning and connecting the visitor with a potential situation in the future. As mentioned in the *Werkstattbericht*, the intention is to make visitors experience the atmosphere

of the new *Mahü*. The two floor-to-ceiling visualisations were complemented with an array of ten poster boards in total, a scale model and a technical map printed on the surface of a table. Two boards displayed numbers and infographics, one announced eight reasons why design needed to be undertaken, one showed the participatory process as a timeline, another the design concept. The remaining four boards were an arrangement of images showing streets from all around the world. One of these boards put the street in historical perspective while the other three boards showed 'international trends' and examples of streets after traffic calming measures were put in place. From New York's Time Square to the Paris' Quais de la Seine, or Montreal's Rue St. Catherine over to Cheonggyecheon in Seoul a total of 21 images showed other cities of the world under the rubric of 'reclaiming the street for people'.

This projection of other places or temporalities by means of images in order to convey a sense of how places will look or feel by adding new layers of information and sensation is something otherwise largely debated in urban research. Söderström (2018), for instance, has analysed how image-mediated forms of urban government leads to the re/framing of projects and problems through visual logics at a distance. In particular, he points out that the ever-more-sophisticated imagery allows for two things: firstly, to bring in atmospheres in our ways of thinking about place, and secondly, to strengthen discursive categories like regeneration or sprawl that then become black-boxed entities that might be employed in a range of contexts. In the case of Vienna, soft mobility and pedestrianised streets are enveloped into atmospheric visions through large-format, sophisticated renderings but also through boards that show a repertoire and selection of practices related to public space as shared experience and public policy intervention.

Another mode of displaying information visually is the use of a scale model and before/after image constellations [Figure 35]. At the centre of the exhibition, the scale model clearly shifts the viewer's attention to pedestrian practices. Moving to the street, we can see the miniature figures populating the model, which is entirely white. The floor is meticulously drawn; trees and people occupy the street. Using another architectural mode of visualisation, before/after pictures juxtaposed pictures of peak hour traffic with new images where runners, bikers, kids and elders cohabit in a newly designed and enhanced street. These pictures foreground not only practices but also things and in particular different elements. Not only is the street's surface made of one kind of material, offering more subtle demarcations, but also benches and a variety of other urban furniture are displayed to convey a better sense of what a redesign brings in terms of quality of urban life. This focus on things is also palpable through the technical plan

printed on the table and the design plan where bubbles offer close-ups of the different elements composing the future street configuration.

Figure 35. Inside the exhibition room © Gibert Novy

Two more boards provide 'facts', giving numbers and presenting the results of the civic survey as infographics. As with the board showing the participatory process, these three boards are designed to highlight the processes of (knowledge) co-production. The amount and hybridity of information suggests that dialogic formats play an important role in collecting various insights, and justify this by stressing the innovatory and plural character of participatory measures. Objective numbers, subjective statements, linear timelines and thematic reasons are aligned to emphasise the role and justify the action of redesigning the *Mahü* for people. Numbers and infographics not only justify different ways of measuring and accounting for innovative urban futures, suggesting the need for people-centred urban planning interventions, they also encourage and value the integration of urban audiences. Involving residents, neighbours, citizens and property owners in processes of participation and knowledge co-production helps to extend policy agendas into collective visions of urban futures. Often

designated as a democratic turn in planning practice, processes of integration bring together a series of actors not only forging novel partnerships but setting shared objectives.

These constituent processes of integrating people and identifying external practices from around the world produce conceptual and visionary categorisations that are still 'in progress'. Highlighting the relative contributions of various actors, monitoring international trends and selecting topics in generating visions of urban innovation suggest that the patterns of involvement lead to new governance arrangements hybridising operational models with the municipality's core values. These impact temporary exhibitions in terms of topics or results and coordinate the attitudes toward participatory urban futures.

How do city experiments matter?

The experimentation space was devised to test new possible re-uses for the *Mahü*. For three days[76], a short section of the street was blocked and various initiatives took place. Car traffic was completely shut down and the entire space became accessible only to people. Experts from the consultancy firm stadtland.at monitored the behaviour and use of public space while simultaneously organising events where people could interact on maps and plans. They conducted an on-site observation during these three days and assessed the relations between space, use and existing urban furniture. Additionally, a 'design workshop' (*«Gestaltungswerkstatt»)* took place as a parallel event, on Friday May 3rd (from 3-7pm) inviting people to incorporate diverse use ideas and suggest a spatial redesign of the street. An aerial view served as an interactive medium, and publics were allowed to actively 'intervene'. The aerial view already included some of the suggestions from the dialogue box and on site interaction with this replica of the *Mahü* opened up the floor and gave people the possibility of exchanging opinions and debating options. Experts observed the suggested changes of use. Based on this observation requirements and insights were taken directly from the participants.

[76] From Friday 3 May to Sunday 5 May 2013, the Neubaugasse to Esterházygasse section of Mariahilfer Strasse was closed to motorised traffic. During the rehearsal period, only the traffic organisation was changed; no reconstruction or changes to the road space were carried out. The difference in level between the pavements and the roadway area remained, as did the street furniture (guest gardens, benches, etc.)

All in all the *Proberaum* aimed to experiment practically with how in the near future the street would feel if turned into a pedestrian area. Hence, in the context of the *Proberaum* experiments were run and documented at two scales: (1) a *Gestaltungswerkstatt* which included mapping interventions by citizens, and, (2) a *Raumbeobachtung* which foregrounded the observation of street trials.

(1) When the design workshop started at 3 p.m. there was a lot of interest in the dialogue box. The many visitors attracted further interested citizens. People sat on the kerbs, children used the lanes as a play area and cyclists used the car-free street. After closing time, the entire street space emptied very quickly. Pedestrians walked on the pavement as well as on the street, cyclists continued to use the wide roadway. The design workshop was a one day event. The turnout for the design workshop was very high. Throughout the entire period, suggestions and ideas were noted on the aerial photograph and discussed with the political representatives. Ideas and suggestions for the redesign of the *Mahü* could be entered directly on site on a large plan or aerial photograph and discussed with experts. The presence of the experts and politicians gave rise to sometimes very emotional discussions about the future of *Mahü*. The discussions between citizens were particularly exciting. It became apparent that the opinions of the population were quite varied. Preconceived positions were questioned and put into perspective. Partly existing fronts - like citizens here, decision-makers there - were broken up in smaller discussion rounds.

According to the organisers, the proposals on the aerial photograph largely reflect the ideas and suggestions in the dialogue box. Only rarely were concrete ideas directly located on the aerial photograph - most suggestions concerned general changes to *Mahü*. The number of people who actively participated in the design workshop is difficult to estimate according to the same source. However, it can be assumed that between 400 and 500 people took part in the discussions, left comments on the aerial photograph or informed themselves about the project.

It is worth noting how urban publics are imagined, and more broadly, how planning is advocated as a form of public action; as, for instance, during the redesign of the *Mahü*. It is also important to mention that past or future strategies and categories are not plucked from conversation or only to be found on paper in flowcharts or leaflets but that they are discussed, experimented and stabilised by means of new settings such as the round table or the participatory workshops. In addition to displaying strategies, these settings allow for audiences to assemble and attest to the outcomes of public action with value. The constant insertion of

futures and pasts into the political and epistemic ordering processes ensures that framing operations of being right and subsequent overflows of doing good align.

Figure 36. Temporarily blocked MaHü with aerial photographs © Stadt Wien MA18

If we go back once more to our workshop, urban newness is not a static message conveyed and preached by the organizers. It is not only communicated to the audience or participants; the audience does not represent a merely recipient entity; it is actively taken into account. In taking part in the focus groups and discussion rounds [Figure 36], participants not only co-produced knowledge, they were part of an event where a set of problems had already been translated into certain practices and objects. The maps only delineated certain zones of the *Mahü* and the flowcharts, posters and other items displayed inside the dialogue box integrated statistics that not only deemed urban development to be necessary but also rendered population growth visible in order for it to be given value.

The expected population growth gives substance and political meaning to drive urban development in the redesign of the *Mahü.* Next to the entrance a sign shows this by drawing the following background:

> *By 2030, Vienna will be home to approximately 2 million people. In order to maintain the high quality of life, more traffic-calmed areas are needed as well as more space and room for the residents of the city centre. Residents, visitors and business owners are invited to participate in the redesign and reorganisation of Mariahilfer Straße.*

(2) Over three days, the event organizers commissioned by the city of Vienna observe what happens to a street without car-traffic when it becomes the location of a series of artistic and

recreational activities. The observation made by the organizers on Friday, highlights how closing the street, and banning car traffic immediately led to changes of use:

> *The examined section was - typical for a Friday afternoon - already very busy on the pavements as well as on the street before the road closure. At 1 pm the street became a pedestrian and cyclist zone. After a few minutes, the noise decreased noticeably and the first press representatives and pedestrians moved to the cleared roadway. Cyclists used the width of the freed-up road space both to ride slowly and as an opportunity to make faster progress than on the otherwise narrow roadway. Gradually, pedestrians moved from the pavement to the roadway. The road was now crossed everywhere. The shared use of the roadway by cyclists and pedestrians worked very well due to the high level of attention of the road users due to the new situation. Only a few cyclists rode through the section at too high a speed. Due to the possibility of using the whole width between the houses, the pavements on the Mariahilfer side or the advertising boards became aware of being obstacles with a strong barrier effect. The still existing pavement edges also represented a barrier - at least mentally - for the pedestrians. Suddenly, the orientation of the two benches facing the front of the houses seemed absurd and people sat down facing the street. Observed more closely, the pedestrians in the newly gained street space were mostly people who wanted to quickly reach destinations outside the observation section. The visitors who were on their way to the shops on Mariahilfer Strasse continued to use mainly the sidewalks. The sections that were very narrow in the conventional state - especially in front of the Generali Center and at the corner of Neubaugasse (due to the construction site) - appeared emptier or more airy.*

On the second day, they describe the alternating uses as such:

> *Mariahilfer Straße was also very busy on Saturdays. At the beginning, taxis and delivery traffic were still allowed to use the street. The free lanes were then used by pedestrians and cyclists, just like the day before. One difference to Friday was that the visitors to the shopping street were there almost entirely for shopping and used the free lanes with greater naturalness. People increasingly used the cleared road for walking, eating ice cream, lingering. Some got used to the new spatial situation so quickly that they also used the roadway for walking outside the closed road space.*
>
> *Conflict situations between the many children (children's program) and faster traffic participants were hardly noticeable. All road users were very attentive and careful. Again, only a few cyclists did not adapt their speed to the situation.*
>
> *After closing time, the usage changed similarly to the previous day. As darkness fell, the bicycle-powered open-air cinema started and made it clear that interest in the use of street space and ideas for it do not diminish as darkness falls. After the film, as on the previous day, taxis drove past the barrier to the abandoned taxi stand.*

Sunday's verdict is described as follows

> *At 9 am on Sunday, Mariahilfer Straße presented a completely different picture. It was very quiet, hardly any people were out and about. Those who were on the street strolled slowly. As there were no places to stay in the observed section, the visitors did not linger in the rehearsal room. From 10 am onwards, the number of people increased. Coffee and croissants were served in the dialogue box, a group of people set up a picnic area on the roadway. Others played badminton or set up tables and chairs for games.*
>
> *In general, the street space was very quiet compared to the observed days with open shops. There are no shops open on Sundays in the observed section, except for a bakery which is open in the morning. However, there was a lot of interest in the use of the open space. The various activities attracted the attention of passers-by to the rehearsal space. There was interest in using the space, but there were no places to stay.*

As a conclusion from these observations, the organizers determined that the open space needs to be organized by signs and freed from unnecessary objects; i.e. pavements should be evened, advertising should be banned etc. They also insisted that to overcome conflict between pedestrians and cyclists some sort of infrastructure would help.

We could focus here on the distinctions that such observations make between events and initiatives and how these map onto the lines drawn between the political and operative levels. Another interesting aspect would be how these levels coordinate and repurpose local development strategies and vice-versa, or, models and approaches are transferred from one setting to another. What combines all of these aspects is how dialogic ways of framing urban change as novelty are influenced by the idea of collectivity as an equivalent to objectivity, progress and newness. From a first point of view, planning is a means to objectify several problems. The exhibition establishes new connections with more people-centred inflections of a so-called 'sidewalk urbanism'[77], where the value of planning is to connect instrumental aims to produce a more socially-inclusive urban society. For instance, one of the core participatory statements was to connect the *Proberaum* with a more broad participatory project enabling the redesign of the *Mahü* to be an enduring dialogue through various interfaces: newsletters, surveys, workshops, exhibitions, inaugurations etc. While these instances of the program are totally dedicated to citizen empowerment, the whole project remains in part strongly associated with a manifestly technocratic conception of knowledge. Multiple schemes show the city as territorial unit arguing that efforts need to be directed towards reducing mobility. Smart mobility, smart furniture and other collective objectives are not only framed through municipal concepts but they constitute answers to bigger challenges such as climate change or population growth. Defined by infrastructural interventions, urban experience is here framed by a whole array of future-driven simulations and issue-specific diagrams written down on post-its or sketched on aerial maps, not only aiming to draw a clear boundary between the value of citizenry and the political interest of governance, but also grounded in drawing up experimental arrangements in order to co-constitute public action via planning.

[77] I particularly adhere here to an understanding of 'sidewalk urbanism' as a multivalent concept and practice evidencing a growing concern, proliferation and celebration of *sharing* urban collective infrastructures (Coletta et al. 2018).

As such, the *laboratisation* of the city happens in two ways. By creating new synergies through extra-governmental forums that follow the figure and experimental set-up of the laboratory and by offering action programmes that combine, on the one hand, people-centred scenarios where good practice meets good governance and, on the other, by emphasising the importance of collective agreements on matters of common concern.

6.4 Making urban worlds predictable

This chapter started with the question: how is dialogic planning coordinated through the formulation of problems? I showed how a pragmatist ANT protocol is suitable for understanding how problems emerge, stabilise and circulate to the co-constitution of planning and public action. The previous chapter has shown how a pragmatist protocol inquires into planning as a rule-making activity searching to achieve good city form as mode of public action.

To show how planning aims at achieving good city life through dialogue, this chapter examined three key modes of organising urban problematisations in planning processes –projects, podium discussions and workshops— how technical democratisation is an issue- and how value-articulation is carried out in scenarios, measurements and collective experimentation.

Thus, while many of the calls for a more democratic planning wrestle with questions of planning as an 'inherently optimistic and future-oriented activity' (Abram and Weszkalnys 2011), and recognise how elusive and conflicting desires shape much of the various and clashing temporalities at play in current planning practices and contexts, much contemporary planning theory appears to pose such questions without further interest in examining how, in the contemporary world, planning deals with the explosion of information, data and other valuation devices; in a world where reality and representation, facts and fictions are not inert, or neatly separately but still of particular significance for urban planning. Contemporary shifts in state practices occur, or at least are undoubtedly profoundly informed (and overflown) by the proliferation of rankings, databases, protocols, records, manuals and international policy recommendations. How do planners and municipal institutions pay attention to the manifold queries about the value of planning and the attempts at making cities and urban development more legitimate and valuable?

In the first section of this chapter I discussed how projects are particularly apt units and interfaces to inquire as to how hidden mechanisms shape and coordinate the doing/being divide in the co-constitution of city planning as public action. In particular, I have shown how the pursuit of (good) projects is about articulation in the short term and scenario-making in the long-term. To do so, I look at how planners and other protagonists measure and conceive standards and finally how they assess and qualify these procedures, thus coordinating and valuing uncertainty with rules and concepts.

The second section shows how experts deal with deliberation in the face of dialogic and good urbanism. Drawing on these observations, the chapter explores what happens if we take a pragmatist look at how legitimacy is achieved by examining the ways in which the manifold orientations of ends (rankings, agendas, numbers) shape the now. Drawing on two public events and workshops during which municipal agendas are discussed, I analysed how scenarios, figures, prognostics, numbers and other calculations or imaginaries articulate and mediate the value of planning as a world-making and citizen-centred activity.

As shown in the last section, a pragmatist analysis centres on how legitimacy is achieved by the valuation and counter-framing of experiments. The formulation of good urban experience in Vienna is recurrently problematised against the background of an increasing population. Nevertheless, the achievement of urban experience in social and inclusive terms also comes with new modes of knowing and approaching the city which is not only oriented by the indeterminacy of future-oriented scenarios but one which also aims to translate future excursions into the drop of the now.

Taking in account the overlapping historical and political contexts, it is important to note here how planning becomes more than just discursive politics. Beyond the advertising practices and symbolisms that participatory public policies vehiculate, it is important to acknowledge that the meaning of expertise and polity are not only determined by a shift from objective efficiency to subjective ritualization but how planning is now a means of public action where the material-semiotic definition of problems and categories is tied to certain practices rather than discourses. Shared meanings are thus not only a matter of constructivism, as some critical policy analysts write, but political agreement is also achieved by collective action. Not in a sense that such projects are arenas embedded in larger political strategies and discourses but how the material stability of scenario-making is a common mode of looking at the world.

Whether or not we accept these democratic narratives of participation, dialogue is a key feature to problematise good urbanism, and it is portrayed and performed as central value for what is considered planning as constitutive public action, even if, as some scholars have shown, participation as a holistic concept is far from representing all citizens, and should rather be engaged as battlefield of interests.

Political and governmental attempts at settling the 'legitimacy crisis' in planning consider dialogic and people-centred forms of governance as opportunities for public decision-making. Dialogue as 'means of re-enchanting democracy' often appears as a remedy in planning literature, and it is common, at least in practice, to see these mechanisms where publics are directly involved as instances of consensus-building. Recent shifts in municipal agenda setting, have not only made the figure of participation, communication etc. an important *actant* in opening up urban development, but these attempts also implicate new rule/value relationships in material-semiotic forms of planning processes. Such applications and understandings, manifest themselves at different levels and through a range of various occasions that collapse the idea of democracy into what Muniesa (2011) has called the *"modern 'objective-subjective' bi-polar scheme"*; a worldview in which value is either a matter of subjectivity or objectivity. As I have shown, a pragmatist ANT-take on the (democratic) nature of planning processes helps to unpack how planners achieve coordination in planning processes, as an intertwining of the particulars of urban development and the universals of governance.

Taking in part issue with, on the one hand, what some scholars have named the 'legitimacy crisis', which posits that fairer outcomes are possible through civic engagement, communication, deliberation, or even dissent and, on the other, the view that problematising novelty (i.e. innovation, progress, growth, development etc.) is an articulation of desires, or attached to it, via its relation to promises, I propose an analysis of the technical democratisation of planning as coordination; that is, as activities that frame and overflow planning processes not only relying on measurements and instruments but in which government officials, policy experts, stakeholders and members of the public negotiate acceptable knowledge bases for certifying and *making predictable* overflows like 'sustainability', 'resilience' and other projected figurations of the urban future.

CHAPTER 7.

TECHNOLOGIES OF TRANSPARENCY

Based on a pragmatist approach, the previous chapters examined how problematisation is conducive to planning practices. I explored how situations contribute to make urban worlds classifiable and predictable enabling planning to be either a practice of doing good or being right; or both. I have shown how rules and values are entangled in prescriptions, protocols and forums. Whereas deliberative views which inform most of planning theory suggest a communicative and normative framework in order to ensure civic fairness, a pragmatist view argues, on this count, that deliberation always triggers and catalyses asymmetry. In other words, deliberation produces a change in legitimacy as the presence of other modes of existence come into account; such modes of action turn citizens into a configuration of the same. As seen in the previous chapter, city planning operates through processes of coordination whereby (the) 'others' are negotiated into legitimacy making them exist as figures, numbers or users.

This chapter further explores how city planning seeks to become dialogic and overcome its practical crisis of valuing. So far, I have suggested that problematisations are implicit to the prescriptive foundations of searching good city form and coordinated by the consensus-driven search for predictability through (urban participatory) governance. In this chapter I move beyond these modes of action and argue that governance itself is composed out of a variety of modes of accountability. Drawing on fieldwork in Lisbon, I examine how political reconstructions of urban governability are geared towards expressing public action as an eventful act of good citizenship, which is primordially understood through aesthetic interventions into the *thingness* of the city.

7.1 A city in movement

O *Pavilhão de Portugal* is a remnant of the Expo'98 world exhibition; Lisbon's largest urban revitalisation project at the eastern edge of the city municipality's territory. A city from scratch. An urbanist's dream. 17 years later, the pavilion's 'interpretative centre' receives the Minister of Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy, Jorge Moreira da Silva opens the inaugural exhibition to the public, "The Imagined City": a retrospective of the architectural, urban and environmental intervention of the territory that is now the *Parque das Nações*. I read this information in the newspaper. Two months later I went myself to visit the exhibition. The exhibition room is quite small: screens, models and maps expose the trajectory of this part of the city's urban redevelopment. Tracing Lisbon's history and relation with water up to the government's initial candidacy and its aim to achieve an international world exhibition, as

much as to reconvert the run-down and polluted area, transforming it from an industrial wasteland to a new city quarter. The exhibition presents an exhaustive overview of the various political, technical and historical means deployed to imagine, plan and implement a large-scale urban development project.

One of the reasons that made me go was the repetitive and constant mentioning of the Expo'98 area as a successful model of urban revitalization (Aelbrecht 2014; Cabral 2015). One encounter in particular made me aware of the importance of this development project. After attending a panel discussion at the CIUL[78], I had a conversation with a prominent Portuguese architect, himself back then part of the several planning teams involved in the preparation and implementation of the project. According to him, Expo'98 was not only about reconverting an undeveloped site, but about expressing and envisioning a concrete urban plan for the future. Our conversation went on with debates around expertise, knowing legacies and the heritage of specific urban models but what stuck with me was the particular idea that grand plans were often icons and narratives of celebration, expressing a particular assemblage of progress in time and space. Allowing for a new change in scale and with its importance drawn on a heterogenous mix of urban forms, Expo '98 was different from other world fairs as it did not conceive of the event as guarantee for successful city development in itself but as a springboard to turn an emblematic project into a catalyst for urban restructuring.

Changes in the ways planning is enacted are still often linked to the imagination of urban redevelopment as a project of 'pluralistic' governance. Often designated by urban professionals as a regeneration tool, there is a long tradition of urban research exposing the entrepreneurial character of large-scale urban redevelopment projects (Hall and Hubbard 1996; Harvey 1989; Jessop 1997; Ward 2003). In response to late deindustrialization, urban development projects are thus illustrative of the stabilization of a particular type of municipal statecraft that works hand in hand with a rising knowledge economy (Lauermann 2018). Writing about entrepreneurial urbanism, MacLoed and Jones (2011) argue that urban politics have been a growing influence on the private sector in urban policy. Similarly, Carrière and Demazière (2002) see the emergence of urban entrepreneurialism as response to the excess of public sector regulations. The public sector then is increasingly drawn to seek solutions through private sector activities. Aiming at creating new economic activities, urban revitalization is part of a

[78] Centre de Informação Urbana de Lisboa — Urban Information Centre of Lisbon

rising governmental regime that signals a better and more efficient articulation between competencies and policies.

Part of a decade which was rich in planning activities, Expo 98 marked a change in attitude and perception of urban planning in Lisbon[79]. Not only was this event seen by the municipality as opportunity to recall Lisbon's worldwide grandeur, one of a programme of events that helped to project Portugal's image internationally, it was part of a governmental strategy to revitalize and modernize Lisbon by providing a unifying vision translated into the image of the city as "the Atlantic Capital of Europe". Prepared in the early 1990s, this vision was part of the *Strategic Plan for Lisbon* ; known for its strong visionary statement and global objective. While my interlocutors often focused their explanation by referring to urban models, or by reference to the spectacular transformations of urban sites in Europe during the 1990s, only a few referred to the institutional relations of plan-making at that time and the new sense of direction city municipalities received through the 1990 legislation which made the conceptualization of a municipal master plan obligatory.

A whole exhibition panel was dedicated to Expo'98 as a project that complied with the comprehensive regeneration strategy and which resulted in the development of the Nations' Park. Various levels of plans with the aim of transforming the of industrial dockland were articulated that break with the tradition of Portuguese urban planning (Crespo and Cabral 2010). Less prescriptive in content and more comprehensive, Expo'98 was not only seen as an urban regeneration project but as an opportunity for Lisbon to become a world city (Castro, Lucas, and Ferreira 1997). An opportunity described as strategy in the 1990 Regional Plan for the Lisbon Metropolitan Area as only to be accomplished if a comprehensive urban regeneration approach was adopted. Not only were the recent planning documents in Lisbon more strategic and visionary, they also set out a detailed regeneration policy balancing various objectives ranging from social to environmental issues. This shift towards more comprehensive planning is explained by Vasconcelos and Reis (1997) in relation to the administrative

[79] Since urban theory is currently dominated by an analytical configuration in which cities are studied by their relative position towards a global urbanism, it is important to acknowledge that I have been mainly preoccupied with understanding what kind of planning is conducted in practice to maintain and sustain urban governance, development and policy. For research on the relative position of southern countries and Lisbon's planning 'culture' Tulumello and colleagues have recently produced a range of insights worth highlighting but that cannot be discussed or contradicted here due to lack of space (Tulumello, Cotella, and Othengrafen 2019).

restructuring with municipalities forced to organize technical and financial resources in order to meet the challenges due to the introduction of strategic urban plans.

Lisbon thus entered a rich phase in plan experimentation with the introduction of strategic plans as means to coordinate municipal public action from 1990-1995. In this regard it is interesting to note the greater commitment towards dialogue and the effort made to increase people's involvement, to promote 'democratization' and the comprehension of ideas, policies and plans. As shown by Oliveira and Pinho (2010), this was also an interesting display of the relationship between planning and politics since the former mayor ran his entire campaign through the promotion of a 'Strategic Action Plan', documents co-written with a planner which became Lisbon's first strategic plan after his election.

Two decades later, the global economic crisis has deeply affected and (partially) reformed the institutional, economic and political landscape of the Portuguese public sector. Almost in parallel, or as a deferred response, Lisbon's city council announced a promissory campaign to devolve the city to its people. In their municipal program from 2010, the city council proposes a resolute and auspicious agenda in which a *city-for-people* is mediated by the idea of a world in movement: liveability, sustainability and other tropes of inclusiveness suggested political openness and a possibility for progress in what was rhetorically and economically framed as an acute 'time of crisis'.

In 2012, the municipality of Lisbon announced its new urban master plan — *Plano Diretor Municipal* (PDM). One of the first official government orders of the new city council. This renewed version of the master plan presents a flexible and ambitious document that juxtaposes existing and elaborated territorial regulations with a new strategic vision. To ensure this vision, the municipality has formulated seven grand objectives: (1) attract inhabitants, (2) captivate businesses and employment, (3) propel urban rehabilitation, (4) requalify public space, (5) make the riverfront accessible again, (6) promote sustainable mobility, and, (7) incentivise environmental efficiency [Figure 37]. In addition, the PDM assures that these objectives are only possible if relying on participatory, transparent and flexible processes. Lisbon's elected mayor António Costa, in the forward, formulates these ambitions as follows:

> *«We got the municipality up and running and prepared for the future. We delivered. Then we made new commitments: to build a friendly, sustainable, close and participatory city. A city of opportunities, competitive, innovative and international. A city for the people. This is the moment to be accountable to you.»*
>
> *António Costa, Former Mayor of Lisbon 2011*

It is interesting in these declarations is how the socialist mayor sees the transition from what has been openly stated as "the worst crisis in 100 years". His social and political commentary is full of what has been called 'Monocle urbanism'; a new way of being and experiencing the city as lifestyle. Aiming to be forward-looking by combining a socialist programme with cultural incentives and business demands from the tech industry, the municipality wants to be attractive and accountable at the same time. This paradox, purchasing greater efficiency and responsibility at the same time is wrapped in the city's response to economic crisis; a political reaction that *the Observer* journalist Moore has labelled as resourceful and imaginative: "*Portugal's capital felt like a 'city on its knees'. Now it is being touted as hip, cheap and innovative."* (Moore 2017). Interesting in all of this is the compliance of the new city council and municipal organ to introduce mechanisms of performance and transparency; to assess governmental 'effectiveness' by encouraging local identity in combination with inspectable strategies that frame the quality of good practices. In this presumable aspiration to self-actualize, to become more professional, the municipality of Lisbon's attempt to ensure accountability and attractivity falls under the growing cadre of what Strathern (2003) has called 'audit culture', which can be defined by the process by which the principles and techniques of accountancy and financial management are applied to governance of people and organizations; important on this note is how these processes of translation have social, political and cultural consequences.

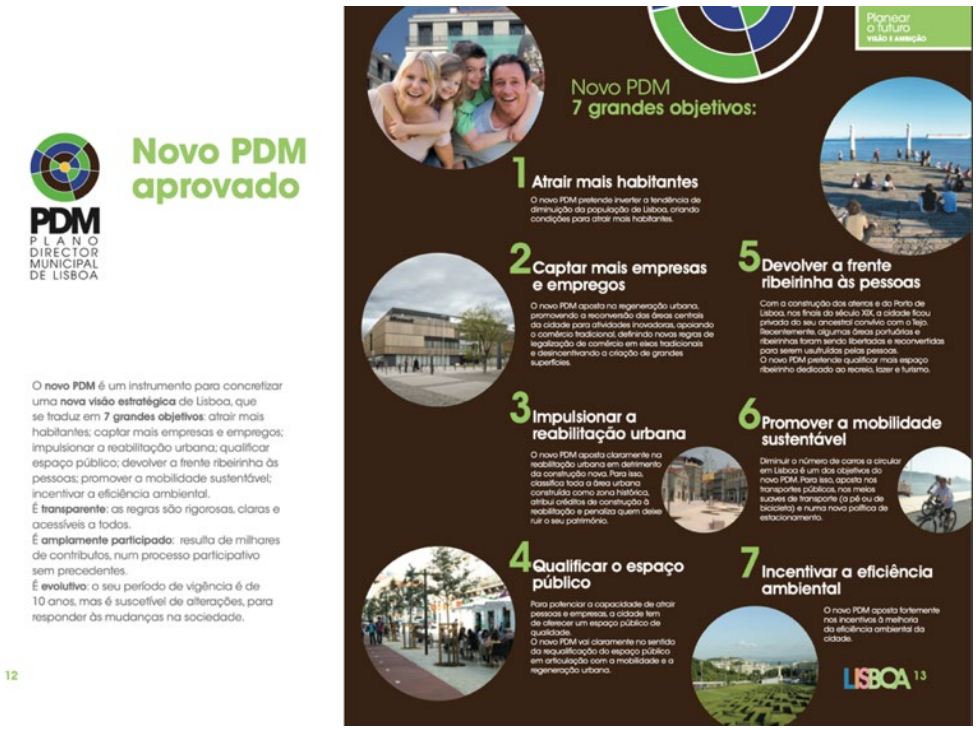

Figure 37. The municipal plan's (PDM) seven guiding objectives. © CML

An important question is what explains and motivates the generally widespread adoption of such mechanisms of accountability and transparency in the case of Lisbon's municipality; and how these factors stand in relation to planning practices and the search for the good city. Such an approach, looking at the audit as a political technology, stands in somewhat sharp contrast with the general trope in academic lectureship on the current state of Lisbon's municipal politics as a mode of neoliberal governance: a phenomenon Simone Tulumello examines as governing by austerity-policy as the aftermath of the economic crisis (Tulumello 2016). From a critical perspective, the deployment of austerity policies is an expression of the neoliberal urban project and suggests local empowerment to readdress ambiguous governmentalities. In the remaining chapter, I will try to draw a picture that suggests a more nuanced transition from the economic crisis to urban regeneration; one which approaches municipal urbanism not only as a direct effect of advanced neoliberalism; on the contrary, as mode of rendering public action more performative, and thus audited and inspected in a world which seeks to inevitably sophisticate, insert and diffuse new modes of accounting public action. Taking my cue from Idalina Baptista's seminal paper that exposing how the idea of Portugal as an 'unplanned country' is as pervasive and omnipresent in scholarship as in practice, offering a view of the Portuguese City as 'not quite yet' modern or civilized (Baptista 2012), I examine the adverse itineraries of good urban living as an universal and collective purpose. This, as I aim to show, signals the relevance of planning as a constitutive mechanism to achieve urban efficiency through a cadre which fortifies governance by expertise and standardization. In return, this pursuit of good life standards through appropriate knowledge and expertise is combined with techniques of governance that understands orderly urban development as a collective endeavor underpinning audit governance models in which the division of responsibility and accountability between state and civil society gets increasingly idiosyncratic.

Before doing so, I will take a little detour to look at how critical urban scholarship describes governance innovation through neoliberal urban policy processes and thus approaches planning as a top-down, profit-driven and entrepreneurial expression of neoliberalism.

Governance innovation in de-politicised times

Post-political planning theorists criticise the spectre of an anodyne public governance. Rooted in the bastion of neoliberal market regulation this kind of political 'regime' is highly criticised for the ways in which neoliberal virtues are horizontally stretched into an idyll of pluralistic governance. On this Swyngedouw (2005) has made interesting claims and observations showing how '*Governance-beyond-the-State*' leads to institutional 'fixes' that rearticulate the state-civil society relationship. Using the example of, Swyngedouw how rule-relations emerge at different scales and thus are dispersed horizontally and geographically distributed between public and private settings. As such the traditional state apparatus is complemented not only by market logics but through new public-private arrangements seeking innovation. Increasingly eroding the democratic character of the political sphere, the rules of the game are imposed by the market with the State exhibiting different characteristics.

Next to the externalisation of state functions and up- or down-scaling of governance to higher or local practices, which create various path-dependencies, Swyngedouw claims that what sets the parameters of a pluralist democracy is the ways in which rules and regulations perform without force or power. Put otherwise, modalities of governance involve the mobilisation of 'technologies of citizenship'; that is, a will to empower subjects by turning them into citizens. Discourses, programs and other tactics shape democratic subjects, making them politically active and capable of 'self-government'. This method of constituting citizenship includes the proliferation of networks that code problem definitions and patterns of public action. Swyngedouw enumerates six such arrangements — (1) Entitlement and Status; (2) the Structure of Representation; (3) Accountability; (4) Legitimacy; (5) Scales of Governance; and, (6) Orders of Governance— that promise enhanced democratisation and improved transparency.

All these observations fit the descriptions above. Lisbon's municipal urban agenda, and most of the program which was translated into concrete measures and policies in occurrence, performs along those lines. Especially the point that the 'macro' political order of the state relies on a complex network of horizontal and vertical associations and becomes manifested at the 'local' level. While Swyngedouw recognises some of the importance of the technical connectedness of political and socio-economic life, he nevertheless remains vague on how politics are not reducible to technology, economy or institutions. This emphasis, on the extended fragmentation of the Sate which is present throughout all of his work, puts together an idea of democracy that understands it to be an unending project. This not only forecloses an

empiricist approach but also reduces contemporary governance arrangements and modes of innovation to a public/private divide which highlights the continuing salience of one way of mirroring and conceiving of the social[80].

The value of the municipal agenda thus could be analysed as an imitation of external elements and the political necessity of governments to mimic urban, economic and technological advancements. In this respect, a post-political analysis points toward the increasing market affordances and economies of innovation that shape and implement an irreversible institutional and technological change. In the Lisbon case, this would be a performative audit culture that foregrounds the current era of 'platform capitalism' where tech communities co-produce an entrepreneurial spirit which offers new models of urban everyday life.

In no way would I contradict such an analysis[81], but it nevertheless remains important to ask how governments require an ability to reproduce such an 'innovation economy' and how it is specific to the conjunction of political and technocratic trajectories. It is necessary to examine how planning is depoliticised through an hyperbolic endorsement of external entrepreneurship and innovation logics as well as how these logics are translated into characteristic means of reproducing an urban order which expects to raise publics and produce topics of collective discussion.

It is intriguing how this position, which thinks of planning as a vector and event of urban governability, appeals to a reconsideration of the apparent symmetry between governments (rules) and citizenship (values). Such thinking across boundaries goes against the generalised conception of planning as normatively aligned with liberal forms of democracy.

In their edited book, planning scholars Jonathan Metzger, Stijn Oosterlynk and Phil Allmendinger (2014) argue that:

> *«… a rewarding avenue of investigation in territorial governance is to pose the question about the democratic deficits of contemporary territorial governance practices as a question of how such practices in different ways relate to 'the political' understood as the ultimate ungovernability of the heterogeneous and multifarious bundles of entanglements and partial connections that we choose to*

[80] Insurgent planning scholarship often starts from similar observations implying that current governance constellations are dominated by participatory procedures that rely on the illusion and idyll of democratic accountability (Swyngedouw 2014).

[81] Particularly inspiring in post-political urban and planning research is the understanding of governance as pluralistic, in contrary to most insurgent scholarship which problematizes knowledge hierarchies as contained within a formal and positivist neoliberal technocracy (Holston 2009; Miraftab 2009).

> *label as 'societies', as well as the related necessary limits in space (Euclidean as well as relational) and time of any governance arrangement.»*
>
> *– Jonathan Metzger et al., 2014*

While I am empathetic to this approach which seeks to dismantle and manoeuvre through planning theory's obsession with consensus-oriented governance, I do not fully agree with the observation that planning has 'become an instrument to displace the political'. This perspective, which draws on post-foundational political thought, suggests that dissensus should be the norm, not the exception and in my opinion, is slightly problematic. I say this for essentially two reasons. First, the centrality of dissensus in political life has little to say about the existence of materials that come to animate public action. A point also raised by Metzger and colleagues as in how techniques of governance oscillate between political issues and technical optimisation. My second contention is that the scope of a controversy and a disruption, or dispute if you will, is already part of the effects of the problem posed by the solution it creates. I draw this observation from Stenger's reasoning, who convincingly demonstrates that designating a problematic landscape is already a way of specifying and reducing its scope of intervention (Stengers 2019).

To be clear, Metzger et al make a tremendous contribution to the field and I only want to expand on their thoughts here. Also, they are not alone in this. Both agnostic and insurgent planning theories commonly approach planning as inherently de/politicised; something I will come to and discuss in the next section. I will pay particularly attention to how city planning under the sign of dialogic public governance has become transparent, not only thinking of publics as passive agents but as a resource of hope. I argue that a pragmatist lens stands in sharp contrast to agnostic and/or insurgent planning scholarship. Focusing on how diversification and standardisation are at the centre of transparent governance mechanisms, I draw a picture of public action where planning is articulated along various rule/value divides. Instead of thinking of planning as facilitating (or resisting) political disagreement, I inquire about the entangled and path-dependent ways of planning being political by virtue of transparency. In part three and four, I empirically examine these ways of planning being and becoming political through the articulation of events, hope and infrastructures. The chapter concludes with a reflection on how urban worlds are made legible and how planning works as a political reconstruction of governability.

Given that today city planning is a highly political and sometimes polemic issue, theorists and critics of planning commonly conceptualise governance as 'counter-politics' either deflecting

the technical into the political or displacing the political into technical exercises. Without aiming to offer any incisive overview into such turf wars or the political 'character' of planning as a profession, I have tried to explore here, how both city officials (practitioners; previous section) and planning critics (scholars; this section) subscribe to their own idealised views of governance and how, as a result, they both obscure political multiplicity.

Urban renewal as 'rule of thumb'

In the midst of a severe financial crisis, the mayor's cabinet was transferred to one of the most precarious areas in downtown Lisbon, *Mouraría*: Part symbolic act, part political move, the former mayor-elect António Costa decided to make the reconversion of the urban district *Mouraría* his priority and it became the flagship project of his political mandate. On this score, the alderman for urbanism, Manuel Salgado (2012) speaks of a 'transparent strategy for a negotiated urbanism'.

Today, this neighbourhood is flourishing: attracting waves of young creatives and entrepreneurs from all around the world, the old city centre is witnessing the beginning of a new era. Sponsored by international and tourism-driven buy-to-let investments, traditional local neighbourhoods are facing difficult times however. For Luis Mendes (2018) a new type of city has taken shape since the economic crisis. One which is complex and provides discontinuous territorial formations due to increased tourism, thus producing new 'urban frontiers' of gentrification. This is visible foremost in the Bairro Alto, an old popular neighbourhood that has become internationally known for its cultural and vibrant nightlife. Tulumello and Allegretti (2020) draw a similar picture although they take us to *Mouraría*; both authors explain how gentrification is not only a local expression of dominant socio-economic and political realities but is articulated by *touristification* and financialization. In particular they show how real estate companies came to change the local capacity for resisting gentrification in the case of *Mouraría*. Claiming that uneven urban development patterns are accelerated by austerity is an analysis mainly signalling how successful urban regeneration policies favour accumulation over local development. Mendes, Tulumello and Allegretti's critical position culminates in the observation that the city is reduced to a mere hegemonic residue of neoliberal domination. It is precisely this type of urban change that has drained cities of their democratic vitality, in contrast to the preferred image of a politicised and grassroots unity that is made up of heterogeneous and constantly interacting social actors/spaces.

The exercise of planning is seen to elicit and facilitate those modes of urban change. An approach Joao Ferrão qualifies as post-Weberian, whereby the state not only adopts a neoliberal paradigm but also adopts a postmodern vision where deliberation is integrated in the ways and conditions of public action to transform cities (Ferrão 2015). Following this reasoning, the governance and government relationship is not mutually exclusive but governance is a mode of government through which the modern state is re-articulated; one which gives more space to democratic aspirations trying to eradicate ambiguity. For Ferrão urban citizenship is only possible in the interstices untouched by the institutionalised modes of legitimate and democratised public action. Echoing the literature of insurgent citizenship, Ferrão indicates that a way out of the modernist political project is to disrupt attempts of neoliberal governance through inclusion and difference.

It is not surprising that the critical and radical position claimed by Mendes, Ferrão, Tulumello and Allegretti are heavily influenced by Marxist scholar David Harvey or post-foundational political theorists Mouffe and Laclau[82]. Observing that the city becomes more and more hegemonic, the analysis of shifting geographies of gentrification signals how the state has acknowledged and tried to anchor a new image of order and identity in the public consciousness. Be it the figure of the 'creative city' or 'entrepreneurial urbanism', the authors take their evidence from shifts occurring in the socio-economic composition of residents to show how policies create inequalities. Indicative of their radical position are their claims about the disappearance of the political and the reawakening of particular kinds of urban order by the articulation of regeneration policies.

Aí Mouraria – Vai mudar para melhor[83] is a case that contrasts the critical position because it carries a much more nuanced picture of governance. Initiated in 2010 by the new government, *Aí Mouraria*, is an urban regeneration project seeking to promote social diversity and foremostly directed against the physical degradation and social exclusion of the neighbourhood. It is interesting to note here is how so-called neo-liberal urban policies take a reflexive stance and aim to formulate critical knowledge on the city. From the perspective of historical determinism David Harvey's analysis makes sense if we concentrate on three distinct operations: an organisation of the world entirely dominated by market logics, a view of urban

[82] Cf. Chapter 3 p. 68 on this.

[83] Own translation : It's going to change for the better.

space as only an economic dimension and a clear primacy given to the question of the production and accumulation of capital. This world is centred on agonistic class relations experienced in spaces circumscribed by the predatory practices carried out by developers which offer a unilateral and causal picture of urban transformation. Market logics need to be understood in how the market is ordered and valued in patterns and regimes of action.

In fact, *Aí Mouraría* has been the object of many interventions with the characteristic aim of introducing a development programme and retexturing the complete district based on contemporary modes of good urbanism [Figure 38]. For instance Veiga Gomes (2017) explains how imagery was at the centre of the municipality's programme to drive and promote public space. It is illustrative how new itineraries and public places recompose the city's fabric and use. Beyond the programs, events and inaugurations, the physical transformation of sidewalks, streets and spaces produced what Veiga Gomes calls a new urban hardware by which she means that public action is not only programmatic or about producing a software of policies but actually leads to an urban transformation. A similar observation is made by Galhardo (2014) who focuses on how the neighbourhood has been re-narrated into a plastic territory.

Figure 38. Mayor António costa at the Largo de Intendente announcing the requalification of Mouraria © CML

This is not to exclude the question of market power, which remains relevant, but to understand, firstly, how market logics, which place the city in a competitive register, find their way into a world which is already largely prepared to receive their deployment. Second, how do they then becomes compatible or not with pre-existing modes of public action, and finally, how, in fact, do these new modes of seeing the urban rearticulate existing ways of planning.

7.2 Event-led urbanism

Moving beyond these two fronts and ways of enacting governance requires appreciating their multiplicity. This in turn requires passing beyond the idea that governance is either good or bad, or a mode of public action oriented towards ensuring market-driven political regimes. Put simple, from a pragmatist viewpoint, governance is not only a spectre haunting democracy but rather it is composed out of several events. Rather than assuming public action could become a space for political disagreement[84], a pragmatist ANT approach calls for an inquiry into planning under 'the sign of the event'. The decisive point here is that in its constant search for a normative idealism and recommencement, city planning has become a virtue in its own right, a gesture of public accountability in the context of political and public disputes.

In the image below the mayor Fernando Medina stands in front of the press and presents the inauguration of the *Jardim de Cerca da Graça* [Figure 39]. Because it is an inaugural ceremony, everyone is in a congratulatory mood. The mayor quickly cedes the microphone to the alderman for sustainability, who speaks of a dream that now dates back 20 years. People play an important role in both narratives. Finally, citizens will be allowed to have what they deserve: a piece of green infrastructure that is accessible and lives up to today's quality and liveability standards. The image of the city, sustainable and resilient but also primordially humane is what good planning stands for. Initially planned to be realised and inaugurated in 2009, the place is a key realisation part of the greening of Lisbon; a long-standing municipal ambition to create a belt of urban nature parks. In the discourses that guided the transformation of this park, greenery produces a positive place image. Acting as advocates for sustainability, these interventions are designated as an amelioration of planning schemes, extending existing planning categories by framing parks as signatures and landmarks of urban embellishment .

[84] I am particularly fond of Jacques Rancière's (2015) argument that democracy is a political event that is characterized by its disruptive capacity to play havoc with politics as a whole, although I would highlight the importance that such disruptions need to be imagined in such a way that shared knowledge becomes more articulated (and not merely disruptive).

Figure 39 Inauguration of the Jardim da Graça © Julio Paulos

A closer look at the audience does not reveal who these people are. At the conjecture of two districts, the Jardim did not attract much attention. As I would later learn, in a conversation with a local journalist, this was partly because the project had a history. One controversy was related to issues of accessibility (no access from the *Miradouro de Mello Breyener* nor from *Rua Damasceno Monteiro*). The public space not being directly accessible for residents from *Graça* itself, local associations sent a polemical letter to the municipality questioning why they did not just call the place Jardim da *Mouraría* as the access was only guaranteed from the bottom of the hill. The concerns were many and sufficiently well-argued; *Graça* is one of the districts with the eldest population of the Lisbon municipality.

Witnessing events

> *"The* Operação Integrada Entrecampos *is of great importance for the city and it is essential that it is carried out with full transparency".*
>
> *-- Fernando Medina, Mayor of Lisbon*

During the presentation of the OIE, Lisbon's mayor insists that the integrative operation *Entrecampos* will be a transparent project. Standing behind a pedestal, showing a high-end rendering of the future redevelopment at the back, the mayor presented the urban development

project that will transform the area. The mayor pointed out the features of the future urban project, a mixed use urban development primarily coordinated by the municipality. It would provide affordable housing, parks, public garden and other public services. Everything was according to contemporary standards of international and sustainable urbanism. In launching the project, the mayor showed what Barry has called a 'demo model', which is a possibility of a real project, rather than its actualisation (Barry 1999:77). To put it otherwise, what we witnessed here was a particular way of showing what can or might be done with a given feature if certain conditions are fulfilled. What is remarkable about this particular story of demonstration is how it is as much technical as political. In part, the mayor used highly technical terms and references and on the other hand he aimed to make visible a future urban phenomenon to be witnessed by others.

Aimed at offering clarity and visibility, the press conference was not the only mode of action. The mayor's cabinet and the planning office had organised an official information event where people were invited to participate. The project was extensively covered by the media. Prior to the public communication, another presentation had taken place to which investors and developers were invited. Why so much attention? Without doubt, these occasions of public presentations can be used to reduce debates and 'advertise' what is new in the realm of urban management. A critique which is often directed at the municipality of Lisbon's contemporary form of communicating governmental activities.

Hence, a possible answer to the excess of publicity could be that elections were ahead. Another factor was the high importance and strategic dimension of the location. In fact, the piece of land in question is located in upper Lisbon and is one of the city's largest vacant plots of land. No doubt the extent of the media interest was related to these aspects. The location represents what Lisbon's city council perceives to be a strategic area connecting history with modernity. The significance of the geographic area represents an important asset in the municipality's project formulation. Less important in symbolic terms, the political gravity of the location can be measured by the designation given in a previous campaign that went by the name Heart of Lisbon [Figure 40]. The plot of land in question was largely advertised by the municipality on a website particularly set up for this occasion. The advertising video explicitly informed viewers about the opportunities that Lisbon had to offer as a capital city and the benefits available to international stakeholders investing in southern Europe. It listed geographic, economic as well as cultural reasons why a financial investment in Lisbon would be an asset.

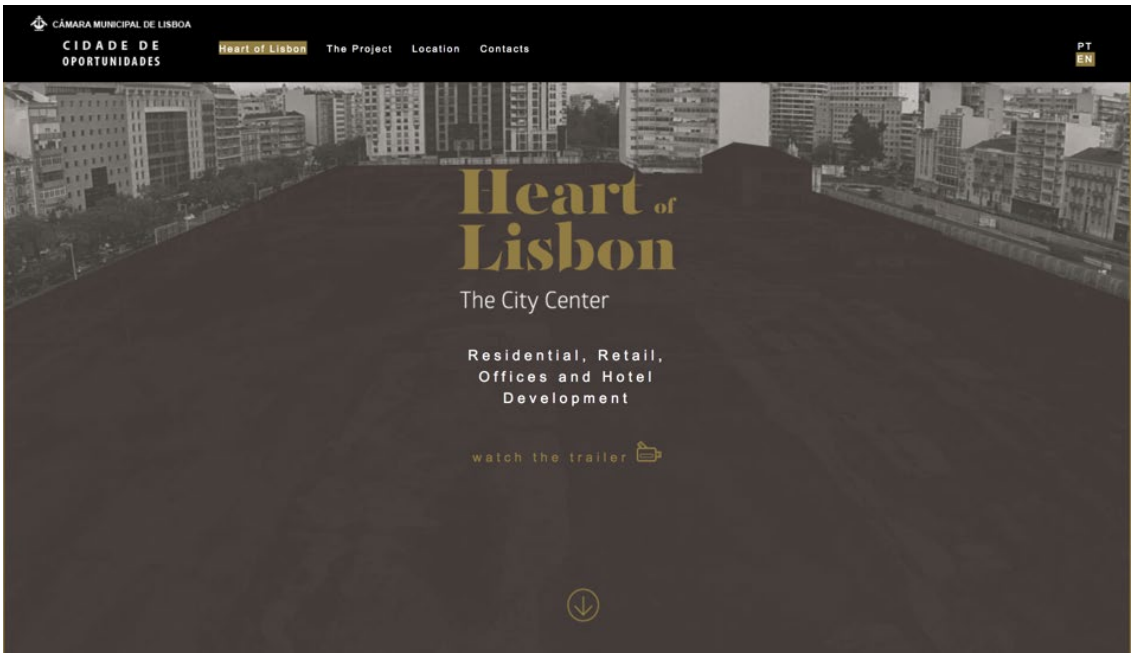

Figure 40 Screen shot of the webpage Cidade de Oportunidades – *City of opportunities © CML*

If we take a look back into the project's recent past, we may take notice of the many controversies shaping its image, which might explain the effort put in by the mayor to successfully reframe the project. An object of dispute between 2007 and 2014, the municipality put the large land plot up for public auction in 2015. In consequence of a successful petition signed by local residents, the municipality needed to justify the project during a townhall meeting [Figure 41]. The dispute revolved around two points: first, the lack of transparency, and, second, the lack of regulatory directives. On the first point, the mayor responded that the municipality needed to conduct internal examinations. Plans were to be conducted in compliance with all bureaucratic order. On the second point, the mayor was more responsive and agreed to settle a deal by changing some numbers: a 10% increase in green infrastructure and 20% in public housing.

In order to understand this undertaking we might need to first turn to Haraway's figure of the 'Modest Witness' to see how the municipality problematises publics in these two occasions of the same but different project (Haraway 1997). Strictly following the technocratic mechanisms in the example from 2015, it posits publics as an outcome of planning processes; one in which publics are a passive entity at the end of realised project. At best, publics are conceived as potential users that will either live or work there. The second instance, which includes a series of public events, upon the enunciation of urban project, the municipality organises these public

meetings as opportunities to communicate the visions for this area and inform interested publics.

Figure 41 Signed petition (left.), mayor and his front desk (top right) and spokesperson association (bottom right) © CML

The centrality of the piece of land and the high-end visualisations, projections and models presented during this second presentation demonstrates the value of a particular type of good urbanism that is co-defined by the presence and involvement of an audience. Public communication was conspicuously prepared and documented. The mayor's presentation was filmed and can now be seen on the municipality's website along with all the project's technical documents [Figure 42]. We are in a setting where the municipality tries to produce an augmented reality, not by muting the audience but by projecting them into scenarios. Relying on material arrangements and planning expertise the municipality plays on the figure of the 'engaged public' to demonstrate that it is taking care of existing concerns and turning them into matters of technocratic priority. This is, for instance, the case with affordable housing which was prominently discussed and presented during this second announcement.

Figure 42 Mayor at the official presentation (top left), audience at the presentation (bottom left), invitation poster (right) © CML

The use of inaugurations to demonstrate achievements is one aspect of these events. The other confers the audience with the status of witness, placing them in relation to the process. These two techniques of making public action visible and conferring legitimacy to publics not only by acting on their behalf but also by commemorating 'with' them; by conveying the ability to respond to contemporary pressures, urgencies and requirements. As just seen, during this public hearing, the conduct of a demonstration, as combining and referring to both a technical activity and a political context, is foremost a matter of witnessing certain lines of possibility. The mayor not only spoke of the city's qualities and advantages but also of progress and a renewed neighbourhood that would finally be up to Lisbon's bright image and standard. A panel was organised with different experts debating urbanist topics and all channels of communication where mobilised.

Three things happen here. First, anticipatory means of communication are repurposed to establish shared concerns with facts being framed according to topical issues such as affordable or social housing. Secondly, the demonstrations create an optical consistency between

technical procedures and political representations and thirdly, these processes of transparency make the potential of the city readily apparent and more value-intensive.

Commemorating awards

Recently, the city of Lisbon received the 2020 award of European Green Capital of Europe [Figure 43]. Lisbon has been awarded the 'European Green Capital Award' by the European Commission — a prize launched to find Europe's 'greenest cities'. As I have indicated before, awards, rankings and audits not only promote efficiency but are increasingly linked to a new ethics of accountability. This is noteworthy not only in relation to the race for eligibility to obtain EU funds to launch urban redevelopment programmes but how, through these occasions, 'the financial and the moral meet' (Strathern 2003:1). To secure these massive investments or awards, municipalities across Europe center their attention on consultancy and new types of commissioned expertise. To render visible the performance of municipal urban development, it not only seems normal to seek external expertise but to engage in policy circuits where auditing is now regarded as an axiomatic part of planning.

During the 2018 award ceremony in Nijmegen, the mayor and his cabinet were present. The mayor's opening words introduced Lisbon as a city which has been habitable for the last 3 centuries and aspires to do so, in a more sustainable way, for the three centuries ahead[85]. Here, we not only can observe how principles and techniques of accountancy are applied to municipal governance but how the affordances towards city planning is changing as a consequence of these political translations. Planners and politicians not only adhere to transnational normative framework but urbanistic and architectural qualities are guaranteed by international certificates that legitimate certain kinds and modes of urban transformation.

As part of this project's commemoration, shortly after its announcement municipality shortly launched a broad intervention into the urban fabric aiming to revamp the *Praça de Espanha*. Employing the usual narratives of exceptionalism, emergency and climatic collapse, the municipality has just now engaged in a large infrastructural greening project by developing

[85] While the mayor makes a reference to the legacy of planning, he does not clearly articulate how a continuity between then and now could be achieved; between the initial 19th Century initial expansionist period marked by hygienist concerns, the 20th Century scientific and legalist era obsessed with functionalist ideals and today's technical democratization of urban regeneration concerns (cf. Camarinhas 2011; Mullin 1992)

this junction. If awards have become a normal object, they have also become a major indication and validation of good urban change.

Figure 43 European Green Capital ceremony (left), Rendering of the new Praça de Espanha as an urban park © CML

The explosion of awards, rankings and other measurements seems to bring reputation to the fore but also it is used to reinforce professional expertise, motivate standardised development and signal triumph. This seems to be part of a wider trend in reinstating professional values in local politics not only through external accreditation but through a pervasive sense of self-actualised triumph. On this account, Penny Harvey (2018) has shown how public works need to be inaugurated as a way to deliver a public good. Not only ritualising public infrastructures but also staging an event which carries and actualises a particular kind of optimism and attempts to render a new beginning. The optimism and implications that come with awards put a new accent on the mechanisms of expert knowledge which is only accepted if conveyed as collective choice and triumph.

In this part, I drew attention to the currency of public visibility and the techno-ethical practices involved in the conduct of demonstration. I focussed on the ways in which demonstrations have gained technical meaning and relevance, pointing out the urban objects, models and infrastructures in question as they are exposed to be discovered and understood. Most notably, I have argued, it is not the actualisation or achievement of these events which functions as proof but the ritualization of a certain possibility in which the techno-political mode triumphs.

7.3 Dreams of urban harmonisation

Realising that knowing and doing planning are two interrelated modes of public action in the search to achieve a commemorative city is one thing. To acknowledge that these modes of action need to be witnessed in order to be(come) legitimate, does not necessarily mean that these gestures matter or shape public sensibilities consequently. Let's go to the *Cais do Sodré* now and look more precisely at the riverfront redevelopment. The makeover of the promenade is a long-term project aimed to *requalify* downtown's waterfront. Often designated as the largest urban transformation since the 1998 Lisbon world Exhibition (Aelbrecht 2014:98; Cabral and Rato 2003; Carrière and Demazière 2002), the riverfront makeover aims at establishing new urban continuities by adapting existing harbour infrastructures. What is of interest here, is not only how the municipality of Lisbon makes use of models and stereotypes of urban development but how these are translated into issues of public action.

While rehabilitation has been a prominent issue in Lisbon since the 1990s (Blum 2007; Carmo 2016), as seen previously, it has received specific public attention since 2010, when the new socialist mayor António Costa was elected and decided to turn his political campaign into a people-centred municipal agenda. The agenda was set to produce territorial continuity. If the Expo'98 site was a classic brownfield redevelopment at the edge of the municipal territory, the underlying agenda aimed to consolidate and ameliorate the urban condition inwards. If we concentrate on the waterfront redevelopment, the aim is not only to offer new urban services but to valorise city experience through pedestrian-friendly and accessible infrastructure. An urban experience where citizens are at the centre of the municipality's governing rationale: 'Returning the Tagus to the people'[86].

What interests me about the municipal agenda, is how it re-articulates citizenship into technical vocabularies (and vice versa). Citizenship, from such a perspective, corresponds to an alteration of various practices where consensus, implementation and the articulation of public action occurs. In such an alteration all entities are not only equally guaranteed but also express a higher moral purpose as to what it means to produce a harmonious urban citizen today. While such an approach draws on humanist ideals, all it dreams of is to produce an overall pleasing effect. Once again at the core of the mayor's speech repertoire when inaugurating the *Campo*

[86] Orig. In Portuguese «*Devolver o Tejo as Pessoas* »

de Cebolas — one of the eight operations; once a parking lot, today a *flânerie* hotspot— Lisbon's inclusive territorial policy plays on similarity and difference. In other words, public action is conducted in order to reduce variations in various modes of doing and knowing planning.

During his speech, the mayor explains how the waterfront project provides an original and emblematic solution, one which valorises the city's identity and image while offering an outstanding urban experience, which stands next to first-rate urban developments on the international scene. Of course, such a narrative is no different from the policy-maker or architect's story who also places emphasis on trans-local connections and yet it reveals an interesting nuance in the relation between expertise and citizenship. The mayor's comparison with the international scenes is not a classic case of thinking through urban *elsewheres* as (Robinson 2016). Obviously he draws on the figure of the waterfront, which is a classic mode of intervening into the urban fabric. From London to Stockholm, we have seen such projects being implemented and since Söderström's now classic work, we also know that places and forms (not only policies) are mobile and stand in relation to one another (Söderström 2014).

The mayor's public appearance is supported by billboards and slogans [Figure 44]. Once again, he emphasises the international ambition. Yet what comes over is not only optimism or a pervasive sense of triumphalism but the harmonisation of urban citizenship as a mode of planning. Since harmonisation is a notion used in diverse contexts, it might be useful to clarify how it is conveyed here. First, the mayor draws on instruments to raise the existence of 'the' urban citizen. By doing so, he does more than to describe the current state of affairs. Instead the mayor reflects and conflates the political with the public interest by circumscribing and limiting the avenues for necessary urban change so as to encompass only those urban developments that create specified hope. I understand hope here in a Deweyan sense, as interpreted by neo-pragmatist Rorty (1999), as the possibility to achieve growth morally.

Figure 44 Mayor Fernando Medina during the announcement of the downtown reconversion © CML

Second, harmonisation implies constituting particular technical solutions that correspond to the problems which are deemed politically important and publicly urgently necessary. Harmonisation needs more than just a few 'recipes for reality', a concept coined by Busch (2011), which explains how political and technical identities emerge through the affordance of certain possibilities of action and at the expense of others[87]. The means by which citizenship is placed in relation to urban expertise is through city experience becoming a normative hallmark. A hallmark in which objectivity and identity are entangled by offering a single version of urban development, which is in turn aligned with the hopes —specified and unspecified— of the good citizen.

[87] Lawrence Busch speaks of standards as the means by which we construct our realities. My use of Busch's argument remains loyal to his understanding of standardization as a moral-technical project, although I do not draw on his constructivist approach.

The diversification of urban standards

How is it then, in a political age of shared ideals, that city governments justify public action for social cohesion and yet liberal logics apprehend and modify governance patterns? Or, put differently, how is it that the signifiers of democracy in contemporary urban governance are not only representative of different politics but intrinsically ramified and certified by justification logics.

An interesting way to approach this question is to take an analytical deviation with Boltanski and Thévenot who argue that neoliberal political regimes rely on conventions of coordination and the plural composition of moral grammars. They are especially interested in the ways that justifications are used or mobilised and their effects, meaning how their grammar or regimes of standardisation action (*justesse*), disguise the inherent capacities of how to address the 'common good'. Let me rephrase this. Put simply, justification in Boltanski and Thévenot's argumentation, is an *ascent to generality*; there is a need to be convincing in times where various definitions of the common good can be mobilised at any time and place. When generalising there are different paths because there are different kinds of principles that can be invoked in adherence to a common good. For instance, if rehabilitation is such a principle of justice, different regimes of planning action can lead to claim this truth. At the same time, the end product, which is not rehabilitation but the common good, can take many forms and its legitimacy is subject to justificatory constraints.

Thévenot has analysed at length this process of integration and reduction of the common good, emphasising the way in which these standardisation operations upset the forms of evaluation that govern our current democracies (Thévenot 1997). If one focuses on objects such as the PDM, we can switch from a regime of justification to analysis of tests of worth. Here coordination becomes a central aspect of their theory (Boltanski 2011; Guggenheim and Potthast 2012). Ultimately, this mechanism marks the advent of a *"political operation (...) that contributes to an unprecedented broadening of the market's hold (...) based on its capacity to reduce other conventional characterisations of the common good to measurable qualities of market products and services that are certified by standard*s" (Thévenot 2009). A case in

Figure 45. Poster of the municpal rehabilitation intervention that won the prize © CML

point is the IHRU[88] prize in the category of Public Space that the program *Reabilitação Urbana da Mouraría* was awarded on January 14th 2013 [Figure 45]. The project executed by the municipality was primarily directed at the transformation of the *Largo Intendente* and had the intention of focussing on the quality and rehabilitation of public space. Delivered by the Minister for the Order of Territory and received by the architect Manuel Salgado who is the elected councilman for urbanism of Lisbon's Municipality, we see here how an operation is evaluated and certified for it to produce truth. A similar gesture seeking to justify public action as an indicator of the city's worth is the implementation of the *Mouraría Creative Hub* or the *Fablab Lisboa* in the neighbourhood (Gaeiras 2017). While both entities strive to offer programs that captivate the local communities, these are initiatives that could be labelled by what Sharon Zukin has come to name the "innovation complex": multiple sites of buildings for technological innovation to occur and mainly built or promoted by city leaders (Zukin 2020:4)

In consequence, cities, built under the growing influence of international quality and audit standards, are themselves becoming certified consumable goods. Such an approach towards *standards* and how these invoke regimes of action and cognitive formats that aim to capture the essence and heterogeneous composition of the public, give rise to concerns that stabilise the world (Thévenot 2007). Accordingly, initiatives like the rehabilitation strategy become quality standards that make a set of solutions intelligible by encompassing a diversity of problems that can be articulated and resolved in dialogue with best case approaches of good urbanism. Ultimately, this leads to a legitimation of 'the good' by relying on objective forms of knowledge and evaluation (see also Breviglieri 2019).

Specified hope

Most of these interventions and inaugurations fall under the heading *[Uma praça em cada bairro]* — a municipal planning instrument that emerged from the urban agenda. Devised to facilitate the rehabilitation of public places in each district, the instrument has turned into a significant act of citizenship. Departing from the symbolic dimension that *[bairros]* districts fulfil, UPCB is an instrument relying on a topographic argument. Unlike many other European cities such as Barcelona or Paris, Lisbon's urban morphology is quite heterogeneous; except

[88] *Instituto da Habitação e da Reabilitação Urbana – Institute for Housing and Urban Regeneration*

for the *Baixa Pombalina*, which was reconstructed after the earthquake of 1775, the rest of the city is a diverse patchwork of different urban characteristics. This diversity has one commonality: the *bairro* as technical and symbolic unit. As the alderman for urbanism put it: both aspects are what makes Lisbon unique "physical proximity and the art of conviviality it inspires" (Salgado 2014:2).

Drawing on the pioneering and paradigmatic Barcelona model[89] of the late 1980s and 1990s, in his introductory note the alderman once again acknowledged that the urban landscape is in need of being re-humanised. It is in this state of mind, that Lisbon should be re-valorised. Long gone are those times where traffic and large-scale infrastructural change dominated the urban. Today, governmental action has the duty of rethinking and repurposing the city and, according to the alderman, the only way to accomplish this is by remodelling and rehabilitating public places to ameliorate urban and quotidian experiences. To do so the urbanist-architect and planners need to rethink their conceptual arsenal. New encounters, according to the alderman, will only be possible if mobility is rethought, accessibility ensured and sustainability implemented.

The *UPCB* is not only an instrument of public action and part of a governmental program but also a strategy for the alderman. More than a strategy it is a new way of thinking planning by turning the city-fabric into a privileged site for problematising people-centred and experience-driven urban development. People-centred urban development, not focusing on the large scale but rather small and timely. This echoes the death of the unitary city ideal and ties in with what Magnusson has come to argue is the rise of an urbanism as a way of life. Arguing that we live in a political age where the main ontology is driven by a way of thinking that opens up to the realisation that *"cities emerge mainly from ubiquitous and proliferating practices of self-government"* . Not only can then all practices be considered political but such a vantage point also allows us to examine urban governments by their will to orchestrate problems and practices of organizing cities by articulating values.

This art of government is oriented at suspending rules by reconfiguring values. Interventions are framed in ways that make citizens feel attached to traditional values and ways of relating,

[89] The Barcelona model is a prominent reference in the field of urbanism and urban studies mainly designating an urban renewal success story that highlights an innovative mix of cultural innovation and urban regeneration (Degen and García 2012; Ilias 2012)

while simultaneously introducing new ways of inhabiting this 'shared city'. Out of both not only emerge aesthetic routines but a specific issue-articulation in which the frames of hoping are specified and possibly generalised, or extended. On this score, Metzger (2018) has written about the function of hope in planning work and how it primarily serves the function of allowing its enactors to permanently carry a feeling of expectation. Metzger is very critical of planning theorists and practitioners that act as if planning could do good things, in handling what he calls 'a less grand reality'. If applied to our example, UCPB is merely a practice of cosmetic rather than fundamental change. New urban furniture, sidewalks and bike lanes are nothing against the more obdurate economic, environmental or social problems. If at all, these interventions even aggravate the situation. The way hope is specific to planning interventions today is devised, it seems to contribute to the illusion that 'progress is being made'. In short, 'hope' is a mobilising emotion that enables technical and political initiatives to unfold, stabilise and reproduce.

A revealing example of this is the *Amália Rodrigues* mural situated on a corner in the *Alfáma* quarter [Figure 46]. *Alfáma* along with the *Bairro Alto* are two popular neighbourhoods that figure in every tourist guide. Spaces of what Gray names the "real Portugal", the *Alfáma* neighbourhood transpires folkloric authenticity. As recounted by many citizens of Lisbon, Fado is more than a music genre (Gray 2013). Rather an urban legend, many stories and unofficial histories exist about *Fado*. Going as far back as to the early 1800's, *Fado* is a sung poetic genre; its original messages were linked to life at the margins and it was later appropriated by the elites (Elliott 2017). The musical subjects and the genre are often designated as affective providing an aesthetic form, framework and sensibility of what it is to feel the *Fado*, which many residents would claim is a 'form of living' (*uma forma de viver*). Inextricably connected to the city, Fado is as much a mystery inscribed in venues and lived by true amateurs. An uncontested icon of this musical movement is Amália Rodrigues. Carrying the nickname 'throat of silver', Rodrigues is a figure and the voice that stands in for a whole world. The former prime minister Guterres said of her: *"Amália Rodrigues was the voice of the Portuguese soul." —BBC News"*

Now it is no way surprising that the municipality of Lisbon would name a place after her. Celebrated for her authenticity due to her rural folk origins, politically savvy and feminine virtue, *Amalía Rodrigues* is also almost the face of the whole city; often represented in graffiti, merchandise and flags that hang from balconies. The collaboration between street artist *Vhils*, cobblestone artisans and the municipality, is an interesting example of how citizenship values

come to co-constitute planning and public action. *Vhils* has been a popular figure in the street art scene for portraits and faces carved into walls. It is worth noting on the one hand how the city municipality combines representatives of the people as well as the generative capacity that it unfolds by associating conceptions of a good place with the semiotics of practices that lead to urban truth-claims. Remarking that this is a monument for our history and people, the mayor makes claims about Lisbon that hybridise the social, the natural, the material, the historic, the good etc. This is what John Law has prominently come to phrase as *material semiotics at work* (Law 2008:154). It is an act of political will that partially connects webs to forcibly remind and undermine an ethico-political reality together at a single site of representation, offering a monument which demonstrates and situates public action and ultimately keeps citizens attached to an urban imaginary.

Figure 46 Inauguration of the Amália Rodrigues mural © Julio Paulos

When these ways of knowing/problematising the city determine what can be considered citizenship and how places should be valorised, the issues reframed help induce new modes of public infra-politics. In other words, we can see how claims to infrastructural development represent what Appel et al understand as '*modes of ruling through material form'* (Anand, Gupta, and Appel 2018:21). For the authors, infrastructures are not only sites for the distribution of life but also a key setting for the performance of politics. Let us visit another renovation of a public place, the last for this chapter: *Praça de Saldanha*, and further explore

this point. *Praça de Saldanha* was one of the pioneering projects to be reconverted as part of the UPCB program.

The ways in which the public places were selected, delimited but also presented to the public consultation events shows a kind of attention that unsettles long-accepted procedures of how to accomplish urban order and regulation. Displaying the impression and idea that public places are infrastructures that serve to rebuild communities and offer updated spaces of conviviality, what we have here is a political immediacy where planning as a rule of government does not anymore seek to organise territories and citizens from far away, but a mode of governing that recognises how access to infrastructures reignites new sensibilities of citizenship and belonging. The constitution of publics and citizens is then as much a work-intensive project as the rebuilding of a place.

Indeed, on several occasions the municipality organised information events not only to convey the relevance of such a project but also with the intention of establishing dialogue and finding points of common agreement. This intended proximity between government and population, as we have seen before, portrays a will to establish a co-presence; a unison between governance and citizenship *made by* infrastructures. While the municipality's intention is to promote citizenship by responding to people's demands, they do so by proposing more pedestrian sidewalks, recreational avenues and green infrastructures.

> *«We are responding to people's ambition, which I believe is great, to be able to enjoy more and better the common space in the city. We are increasing and valuing the public space, which is becoming more central for everyone to use and enjoy, whether it's to sit on a terrace, walk or cycle, or have fun with our children in a park.»*
>
> *-- Fernando Medina, Mayor of Lisbon*

Of course, there's no prescriptive relation between public infrastructures and the constitution of publics. The making of publics does not mean that infrastructures produce political subjectivities but they assemble collectives and generate what is considered to be the good by aligning and materialising aspirations. This case shows how various problems such as mobility, decay, integration, identity and/or accessibility all become gathered by the materials of public infrastructure.

To follow Larkin (2013) on this, benches, bike lanes and kiosks produce new experiences of the world. They are technical and aesthetic devices not only carrying their own vitality but also generating meaning. As such, new material relations between imagination, technicity and politics reassemble our ways of seeing, inhabiting and conceiving of the urban.

The performative interplay between political signals and public aspirations is interesting to note. As the aerial view of the *Praça de Saldanha* taken from the municipality's webpage shows [Figure 47], transformations of urban infrastructures are a springboard for justifying public action in the name of dialogic democracy. Rather than a laboratory, the City becomes a prototype of response-able action, however unravelling an asymmetric distribution of problems.

This pursuit for good life by means of infrastructures, however consensual it might become, only seems to be a rearrangement of existing practices encouraged by the reinvention of democratic duties. Such a mobilisation of managing conducted through explicit governmental mechanisms of transparency often leaves unattended other obvious points that constitute how people use and relate to the urban environment (see also Simone 2004); a surfacing and deployment of constitutive publics, in terms of what counts as atmospheric and how politics with things is done . For planning this means that we are no longer in a state of urban affairs where the municipality proceeds to enunciate plans without *'encapsulating'* the public.

Figure 47. Group picture of the mayor with pedestrians/citizens © CML

This is different from traditional ways of consulting public opinion in participatory processes or investigating the public understanding of knowledge, science and policies. This work of public opinion formation is implied in various settings making people capable of offering new topologies of engagement and group life (see also Lezaun and Calvillo 2014).

Here, I particularly adhere to an understanding of planning as an extended specification[90] that goes beyond the confined settings and mechanisms traditionally associated with public participation in order to include the infrastructures and issues of urban experience. In hindsight with such a topological representation of public action as events and infrastructure much is described by the visual language of things, and the texture of physical space. In a way, this corresponds to what Lezaun and Calvillo have called a shift in the parameters of political experience enabling new sites to be triggers of democratic order due to their attendant qualities; particularly suspending the rules of modernity which are then carried out and distributed into multiple values of urban 'group belongingness'.

7.4 Making urban worlds legible

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the relevance of cities is being framed as a solution in the name of public action. City municipalities as in the case of Lisbon, seek and aspire to uniqueness through the infrastructural composition of urban landscapes and experiences, but technological novelty needs to be inscribed in local needs and democratic processes. What I have been trying to prove is that material-semiotic interventions in and to the urban fabric are not only portrayed as being in the interest of 'the public', they are entangled in problematisations of becoming public that link to other modes of governing and to the 'city-as-a-whole'. In all circumstances, municipalities argue that the more public action is public (relevant and transparent), the more citizens have not only a direct say but an impact.

This way of solving urban and infrastructural development corresponds to a broader shift towards a widely shared consensus on civic engagement, that emerged in most western cities as a peculiar form of participatory urbanism over the last two decades. In the previous chapter, the point was to follow where city planning actually takes place, outside of its day-to-day politics. We have seen how planning still 'terrotrializes' spatial outcomes; epistemic objects like maps or codes, play an especially strong part in ordering problems. Within this modernist

[90] A specification which comes through the reinvention of professional roles beyond or in compliance with technocracy. On this score, Zakhour and Metzger have painted a vivid argument that shows how professional commitments enact a world in which specific codes of conduct beyond the technically-oriented role manifest a concern for democracy while superior mechanisms in urban development still prevail in the coordination of decisions (Metzger and Zakhour 2019; Zakhour 2020)

frame, public action begins with control. Outside of it, public action activates hope and harmony. My attempt here is not to separate planning from 'the political' but to point out that public action today is characterised by finding responses outside of their own political work-frames. This is by no means a distinction between top-down and bottom-up, or ordinary vs. exceptional politics. The object of city planning, with its spatio-conceptual epistemology, is still very traditional. However, city planning reaches, acquires and achieves legitimacy through the deployment, nurturing and validation of issues to wider modes of public action rather than engaging with inherent and intrinsic modes of knowledge production.

Taking the previous observations in consideration, we see how planning *devises* urban affairs as public action and vice versa. While planning is inseparable from the backgrounds and contexts it is set up against, we encounter a distributed characterization of the politics of public action, where maps, renderings and events serve to successively test issues, adjust outcomes and reduce the possibilities of 'other' urban realities. Rather than mere tools or representations, I have shown how planning practices are devised as patterned arrangements with different matters of emphasis. While the political is often characterized as vertical, bounded and absolute, or reduced to a priori generalisations such as the paradigmatic shift from government to governance, planning associates specific relational patterns in two ways: **(1)** as procedural work on 'issue-expertise' and **(2)** as an atmospheric composition of socio-material conditions.

Empirical observation has shown how democracy is an anchoring device to formulate responsible public action; a common frame through which planning performs knowledge and the governance of cities in civic ways. Inaugurations, roundtables and information events all form new configurations of planning's procedural work. Technocratic expertise is shared and the issues that arise from these modes of elicitation make for a new way of thinking about and regulating cities. Cities are not just thought of in terms of grandeur, or superlatives, they become hopeful actants and emerging issues upon which planning needs to address and rethink its expertise as something *good*.

Simultaneously, these socio-technical and epistemic displacements of public action not only produce more entangled knowledge-claims between technocracy and the civil society, they also produce new modes of coexistence, where the trajectory of planning issues becomes a collective experiment. This collective experiment is important in co-constituting the formulation of urban problems —such as rehabilitation— as shared public problems. These so-called experiments cannot only be considered as rhetorical strategies being politicised through

certain actors, but, if following a pragmatist approach, they can be thought of as a reformulation of objectivity equipped with old and new technologies. This objectivity is not static, as we have seen in the three examples; it follows different logics that instantly and collectively shape planning procedures, leading to specific modes of problematizing the city as good, as a shared and common realm.

CHAPTER 8.

CONCLUSION. Towards a cosmopolitical compass for city planning

This dissertation has examined how particular types of city problematisations and the situations they put to work constitute various modes of public action across three European cities: Lisbon, Vienna and Zurich. I sought to address the following research question: how, in a political age where shared ideals dominate our sense of the common world, new situations and events of urban technocratic expertise shape public action and constitute the common good.

The last engagement I conducted directly with my field was a part of a participatory planning process. At the buffet I conversed with a former colleague of mine. We knew each other from a shared workspace. Our paths had also collided because we were attached to the same research centre at some point in time. She was now project manager with the biggest real estate firm in Switzerland, leading an urban development that was much contested. We embarked on a curious sort of discussion. The fact that I mentioned the controversial character of the project put her immediately in a defensive position, counter-attacking my argument as being one-sided, deliberately picking up polemic half-truths. From my standpoint, I had only rehearsed what I'd had heard from the media and previous conversations that I'd had with some more fundamentalist opponents of the project. For her, the conduct of a participatory process already constituted a valid democratic implication; many citizens were not at all satisfied by this 'benevolent' act. It was clear what they demanded: an abandonment of the project and the recovery of the lands in question to the public sector. Although this might sound hypothetic and unrealistic, it is what the opposing associations were hoping for, since the firm had only received the fields for little money and had already developed all the track lines on their own. Their position was more than a protest; it was an open call for retribution.

From this conversation there merged a sensation of having not only experienced the pro and contra of dialogic urban development but also the *hybridisation* of expertise in the pursuit of good city life, an observation which resonates considerably with Michel Callon's (2009:216).) statement *that "Thus most specialists reckon today that the establishment of a counter-expertise to supplement and enrich classical expertise is sufficient to ensure the diversity of exploratory paths".* When the evening was over —by over I mean after the buffet was finished, contacts made and credentials exchanged— I headed home biking past the *Hardtum-Areal*. At 47000 m^2 it is probably the last vacant plot of this considerable size in Zurich West. As I am writing these lines, the *Hardtum-Areal* is the object of a public referendum. The debate involves a private development plan, known and marketed as the *Ensemble* project, which

foresees a football stadium and two towers, each reaching a height of 135 meters[91]. While agreements have been accorded in principle, forums scheduled and workshops announced, this referendum is not only another intermediary to enrol people but a political manoeuvre that allows for issues to be expressed as public affairs. It is a manoeuvre conceived as a space of extension to broaden a range of voices and viewpoints to be included in the process while the project itself will be carried out regardless, although maybe differently constituted.

The research study began with me trying to grasp planning cultures in action as part of a larger research project. By following planners as they negotiate land-use plans, I've come to the observation that city planning involves much more than the standardized processes of institutional bureaucracy: its ecology[92] of practices has extended to a larger configuration of sites and settings. With the articulation of urban affairs becoming less exclusive and more complex, we witness how public action not only becomes intertwined with novel means of expertise but how it sets democratic value in itself, captivating controversies and validating outcomes. This observation retained my attention as it was visible and present throughout all my fieldwork. At the same time, it centre-stages how planning has become a public matter. The bottom line is that planning is not merely displaced or extended to new political arenas but that a selected range of 'things' —such as the master plan or zoning code— reappear in a more realistic and eloquent fashion outside its traditionally confined use, so as to reduce general concerns. In other words, city planning has attuned to new issues by offering less opaque mechanisms and layers of translation, mediation and conclusion. With its central objects such as maps, models and renderings repurposed for the sake of representing 'direct democracy' and reimagining urban public life, planning foregrounds the ability to concentrate and distribute legitimacy, yet, urban affairs remain fairly disarticulated.

8.1 The democratic disarticulations of city planning

If we attend to the ways in which planning is relevant to include publics and issues, then it does not suffice to treat its extensions otherwise because they aspire to certain ideals or models. The

[91] https://projekt-ensemble.ch/

[92] Drawing on Stengers, I refer to concrete situations involving actions inscribed in some duration. While I do not expand on the concept within the dissertation, I believe this is an interesting angle to be further explored in the context of planning for the un-/common good (Stengers 2013).

question remains open as to what capacity, not extent, their implications are ensured in the operative treatment of urban affairs. Not only what actors, institutions or facts enter the decision-making processes but also the way democratic legitimacy is achieved.

The becoming public of planning as part of a more democratic politics led to considerable urban transformations which were not necessarily received with a lot of praise. While political representatives and urban professionals try to force innovation by every means, thus elevating standardized procedures towards more inclusivity or sustainability, these intentions and emerging mechanisms often complement only existing accounts. As seen in the empirical research, problems of representation, density, growth or recovery fail considerably to address the 'burden of relevance', that is, to question how certain actors, institutions, platforms and vocabularies define publics in certain epistemic terms or political processes, and consequently distribute problems unevenly across arenas – with those arenas constituting their own publics to justify a participatory processes of decision-making or knowledge production. The branch of STS branch known as 'Public Understanding of Science' (PUS)[93] comes close to defining the formation of publics as a problem of construction or distribution where epistemic or political processes feature in normative agendas that extend existing procedures of decision-, knowledge- and policy-making.

In contrast, the present dissertation aims to show that the extensions of planning are neither uneven, optional or punctual. Rather than a problem of inclusion (or asymmetric distribution), city planning is distinctive as it has become a modality offering a particular relevance only in entanglement with issues. According to pragmatist philosophers Dewey and Lippmann, issue formation is ongoing and creates mutuality. In other words it is relational, entangled or hybrid (to use Callon's terms) and therefore the constitution and relevance of the public is mutually located *between* sites, procedures and vocabularies. My understanding of public problems of relevance takes up a pragmatist tradition prominently appearing in the work done by post–, near– and pragmatist ANT scholars on ontological and material politics.

By juxtaposing three cases I have tried to advance an analysis of the effects of city planning becoming a matter of public concern. A key observation that has emerged recognizes the various expressions of public deliberation models and divergent dispositions of information

[93] Since ANT's itinerary is co-dependent with STS, it is important to note here that STS scholars such as Sheila Jasanoff, Alan Irwin and Brian Wynne have explicitly shown how epistemological extensions or the emergence of new political arenas bracket issues and offer satisfactory settlements for institutional 'outsiders'.

strategies. Be it Lisbon's consultation tactics, Vienna's generic use of the dialogical format or Zurich's more stringent stakeholder/user/layperson perspective. All of these governance approaches and planning practices offer various frames, generalizations, characteristics and constituencies of 'publics', ranging from generic forms of sociality to peculiar notions of technology. Sometimes publics figure as mute audiences, other times they become (proactive) political or entrepreneurial experiments with public engagement being more often diminished to a representative value –through planning objects– rather than a meaningful and relevant exercise. The strength of these 'malleable publics' is their tremendous capacity for establishing new relationships. Something Arendt would call 'the boundlessness of action' (1998: 191).

Particular to this dissertation, I hoped to show how planning publics make, frame and offer unexpected connections, something Latour (1998, 2004) would qualify as novel *articulations* of city-making.

Lessons from Lisbon

Chapter 7 goes on to examine planning as an expression of urban governance coupled with an omnipresent sensation and articulation of transparency as virtue. In a context of turmoil due to evictions, over-tourism and the consequences of a financial crisis, city planning has been the subliminal engine leading to a complete overhaul of the urban governance. While most regulations and procedures remain intact, we witness an overflow of novice narratives wrapped up as rituals, promises and landmarks. We witness how memory and tradition conflate with technology and innovation to produce a particular urban experience and sensation. City planning is not only instrumentalized, it is reorganized along technologies of elicitation, that is, the public is enacted as a central image of urban governance while basic issues of planning are left aside in a highly technocratic realm thus creating a considerable imbalance between progress as hope and legitimacy as virtue.

Lessons from Vienna

Chapter 6 shows a completely opposite direction in planning practices with publics endorsing a central but often distributed role. While the municipality and political campaigns openly and purposely communicate planning in the form of dialogue, a large aspect of planning procedures remains subject to bureaucratic order, somewhat invisible to the 'public eye' and often framed as irrelevant or technocratic. Here we see a disposition where futures are being evaluated above

present conditions receiving a lot more attention through public orientation in anticipatory measures and devices. Expertise is expressed collectively but mostly pertains to a near or far distant future, with only certain statistics and categories like living labs or resilience of will carrying on the city's potential further; planning accommodates such thinking 'easily' due to its public and bureaucratic characteristics.

Lessons from Zurich

Chapter 5 ought to show how a lateral opening of an integrated planning practice such as zoning can backfire in many direct and unconnected ways. While experts keep disputing the scientific correctness of their claim, audiences are muted through information, complexity and history. We see the expression of a planning system highly systematized by political affairs, bureaucratized procedures and expert-led knowledge. These interact only on preformatted and given occasions leaving little room for experimentation or change outside of epistemologically grounded courses of action. With the focus on architectural typologies, aesthetics and design, the city becomes a predictable unit where citizens are nothing but users or spectators.

All three cases expose a mode of governmental enthusiasm for issues. Issues that mark a more general drift and upsurge towards issue-oriented planning and public policy. Adopting an issue-oriented approach is not an institutional mode of action but has, for at least two to three decades, become a governmental rationale; an approach that seeks to provide proof in order to push forward, inform and justify urban development. Some have argued that these modes of action correspond to a shift from government to governance, others see this as an opportunity to make governmental action less modern and more systemic or tactical. The chapters pick on particular stories of *problematisation-in-action* and the rise of shared matters of concern in municipal city planning. By re-narrating these, the chapters do three things. Taking up normative, utilitarian and critical debates in the field of planning theory, all three chapters highlight how democratisation is not only another instrumental model but a resource for public action to reduce disputes and make sense of urban problems. Second, the empirical chapters expose how problematisation is achieved through experimentation, turning urban settings into sites, instruments and entities to be tested. Finally, I show throughout those chapters how technical expertise is distributed and enacted through valuation, or, put in *Callonian* terms, 'processes

of qualification', which trigger new modes of problematisation whereby issues and citizens come together to form an urban democratic *collectivity*.

That said, the empirical observations aim to show how various configurations of planning are connected with good city ideals, thus sustaining or colliding with political values of urban governance and how publics become a constituent valuation device of planning processes.

8.2 A pragmatic attitude to planning: Problematising back

I have positioned my work in conversation with scholars in planning theory and pragmatist ANT. As we have seen in *Chapter 2*, I relay how planning research invests in the normative capacity of theory-making. While some theoretical schools were preoccupied with offering a communicative ground, other reactionary approaches insisted that even communication and consensus are entangled in normative formations of power/knowledge. My own view is motivated by an analysis of the coexistence between various modes of valuation. Not only in theory but also, in retrospection, in how theory enacts its own practical politics (ordering) based on conceptual displacements, classification and normativity. Put simply, theory has its own politics of entanglement in which facts and values are intricately interwoven.

By analysing these trials of force, we have come to the observation that the rule/value or knowledge/action divide is a disposition helping scholars to sort things out. Just planning theorists (*Chapter 2*) and critical/insurgent scholars (*Chapter 7*) repositioning a field by following theories and debating rationalities. In a nutshell, those fronts underlie either consensus or conflict. While the latter consider planning as a technique of governmentality for order in society, they remain quite disinterested about the public outreach of such mechanisms, other than them being an expression of power, inequality and/or exclusion. Drawing on insights from ANT's pragmatist protocol I attempt to expand planning theory through the lens of material politics and shared expertise. This inductive exploration is not an attempt to illuminate or improve planning theory, but to push the conversation initiated by the material turn in planning theory further, counter to the often trivial scholarship on materiality and planning. In the remainder of this chapter, I highlight two imminent routes by which planning theory can be revisited as an articulation of material-semiotic entanglements around the rule/value divide, but before I briefly sum up the existing connection between planning theory and pragmatism in the next section.

Planning theory and pragmatism

Pragmatism's influence on planning theory is significant although pragmatist theories never reached the status of other philosophies. As Harrison (2002) once wrote, 'planning theory turned first to philosophers such as Rawls and Habermas or to contemporary pragmatists' rather than taking cue from Dewey or James. Harrison's guess is that planning theorists were seeking new certainties at a time when positivism was in decline. These new universal principles were not to be found in pragmatism's empiricist tradition, which consequently rejects abstract reasoning and all kinds of idealism. Only in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s was pragmatist thought picked up more consequently. Taken to represent practical action, pragmatism stood in contrast to prescriptive theories; according to Muller (1998), a trend that needs to be posited in planning theory's paradigmatic change towards post-positivism (or post-modernism), which has become more sympathetic to explore as it 'exhibits characteristics such as fragmentation, pluralism, decentralization, non- conformity and diversity' (Muller 1998:296). The turn to pragmatism is linked with planning theory's realization of the unsuitability of grand theories and the ambition to re-introduce new modes of practice in order to address particular issues in particular contexts. Charles Hoch, in particular, translated this Dewey-inspired empiricist reasoning to the field of planning. This enthusiasm may stem from a number of interrelated factors such as frustration about a lack of action in theory or an interest in process rather than outcome, but, as Kloppenburg (1996) suggests, the post-modernist resurrection of the pragmatist spirit is due to its commitment to experience and democracy.

These points resonate with what I have tried to show in *Chapter 2*, namely that the ideas and inspiration taken from classical pragmatists are interdependent with a discipline's own values. Not only was Habermas himself inspired by Dewey, at least on some occasions as Joas (1988) has shown, but the interest in pragmatism was part of a discipline's quest for conceptual openness and a newly endorsed attitude towards interactive relationships, forms of action and the unfolding of processes. Reviewing these interrelated trajectories I have not only tried to reconstruct the various rule/value entanglements but also aimed to position myself in this collection of normative positions and pragmatist attitudes that sprawl across planning theory. In the end I highlighted the importance of problems and issues in ANT's pragmatic orientation that I suggest is leading towards a more concise inquiry into hybridized frame-works of public action.

Planning theory revisited I: ANT's pragmatist reading

At some point in *Chapter 3* I bring together insights on problematisation from various authors: Dewey, Foucault and Callon. Deweyan problematisation is a mode of inquiry that is particularly invested in studying contentious situations implying the transformation of undetermined issues into sets of problems. Foucault and Callon's approaches are more of a second-order analysis, not reflecting from the point of view of the one who analyses, they situate themselves in another analytical position, asking how various actors raise issues, identify situations or justify decisions etc. Tracing how experts are involved in problematising issues and orienting problems is to intervene in the urban. Signalling a particular mode of public action, the ways in which issues turn into problems of planning helps us distinguish the contemporary urban moment from previous and other ways of governing. In this dissertation, I focus on the paradigmatic municipal sites of city planning problematisation. This resonates with ANT's intellectual project as it conveys heuristic devices directed to *empiricise* planning but also because such a posture asks to what extent planning is a mode of public action seeking to co-respond to a normative hallmark.

A lot has been said about the benefits and shortcomings of ANT as method, theory and/or sensitivity. This dissertation is not conceived to enter or respond to those debates. Neither does it aim to add yet another layer to a seemingly-existing ANT canon. While I do map and deploy some of the trajectories and connections between prominent ANT-authors and canonical concepts, I do not wish to remain faithful to a project which is 20 years down the road. Or maybe, to let me rephrase, I do not believe nor see ANT as a single coherent thing. Rather I follow (not-so-)recent expressions that denote ANT as a highly mobile label and companion or sensibility; in short keeping ANT near me as a source of inspiration for my intellectual practice became part of my research. Pragmatism, Dewey and Foucault speak to ANT in many voices; they inform and ignite some of the most important ANT-principles yet again, the way I recomposed them is devised towards analysing the co-constitution of city planning and public action. As I hoped to show, for pragmatism, Foucault and ANT problematisation is not some single-authored and well-demarcated process in which one frame is purported to solve one problem. Ultimately two aspects remain crucial as to ANT's importance when revisiting planning theory from a recomposed ANT-pragmatist approach: **(i)** the multiplication of entities — problematisation is not only about actor-relationships but also how environments and entities come into being; and **(ii)** the heterogenous composition (hybridisation) of these new

entities coming into being — associations arise and derive from various domains: planning and architecture, engineering and design, governance and innovation, science and politics etc.

Planning theory revisited II: ANT's fierce empiricism

Identifying that city planning is following demands to be faithfully represented I have embarked on an inquiry to situate its practices. Accordingly, *Chapter 4* reports how I have navigated institutions, documents and indicators, once to find out how the urban setting is surfacing to become a heroic figure in contemporary urban governance and, second, to experience how technical heroism has become a mundane mode of ordering planning's practical politics. Such heroism is inscribed in 'scientific' stories, material infrastructures, technological myths etc. with governmental action increasingly directed to qualify urban affairs in the name of the common good. In such tendencies, particular problems and uncertainties are reframed to address and affect publics. Urban projects, agendas, infrastructures and models become practical achievements and signifiers of governmental action, whereby city planning either offers support for political settlement or becomes crucial in public issue articulation. From an ontological perspective, I conclude that planning practices cannot be distinguished by their procedural characteristics but must be analysed in terms of particular operations of the common good that they aim to perform. Once we challenge planning beyond unitary concepts and in relation to urban settings, it becomes crucial to investigate how different modes of planning relate to one another and articulate in different ways together.

Key to such an understanding of planning, as I suggest, is that urban settings have become a serious political frontier for the enactment of technical democratization. It is important how programs, forums, indicators and infrastructures ignite the rules, ideas and values of urban change by *publicizing* planning. I suggest that the central importance attributed to urban innovation not only leads to a multiplicity of imaginaries but to a reframing of planning relevance. From this perspective, we have seen how a reconfiguration of frames not only constitute new moments and sites of political activity but also how these grant different meanings and resources to planning (issues), which are more or less able to get public attention. As a consequence, situational frames about innovation, participation or politicization offer a paradoxical effect. By paying close attention to the material, textual and linguistic devices we recognize the fragility of framing. Not only do objects and bodies overflow the framing constantly but uncertainties can be induced and concerns aligned. By mobilizing living labs,

interactive workshops and inauguration events, municipalities cultivate 'shared uncertainty'[94] and enable the formation of concerned groups.

To take the analysis of problematic deployments a little further, it might be helpful to consider what the reconfiguration, and not simply the 'politicization' of planning relevance does to the urban political setting. Political activity and urban affairs are not only reoriented, by circulating policies or distributed/disputed facts, they come to matter in, through and by the city as a multiplicity of urban assemblages (Farías 2011). Put differently, the relevance of planning is not (only) political, epistemological, economic or cultural but an *ontological problem*. As I have tried to prove this involves paying closer attention to the composition of urban worlds, or how, in the name of amelioration such as progress, innovation, technology etc, heterogenous techniques for the public representation of urban reality are enacted.

8.3 What is a *cosmopolitical* articulation of city planning?

The chapters of this dissertation detailed how problematisations take shape through city administrations becoming dialogic, or better said public. The urban situations I analysed are part of a political age in which municipalities seek to reconstitute their modes of public action. Drawing attention to how planning re-articulates the political problem and aims to contribute to the composition of urban common worlds is also a call for the exploration of how various ontologies coexist. Studying the multiple problematisations that enact specific urban realities of how to plan is a move that shares a similar conceptual basis as Blok and Farías' call for analysing 'how shared urban realities are made and remade' (2016:7).

Just as my findings aim to contribute to existing debates in planning theory, city administrations becoming public can be observed outside the realm of dis/entangled planning practices, by studying housing, traffic, digitisation, climate or design in urban governance. By inquiring and engaging with the multiplicity of problematisations, we need to recognise the

[94] The nature of uncertainty has been largely studied in planning theory through the lens of indeterminate futures and the unknown (Abbott 2005; Balducci et al. 2011; Hillier 2016). A major contribution on this regard is Christensen's classic article that unfolds the known/unknown divide along with the explanation how government expectations respond to planning problems through programming, bargaining, experimentation or chaos (Christensen 1985). More recent planning theory considers uncertainty as a part of complexity thinking (Zandvoort et al. 2017). In contrast, 'shared uncertainty' refers to a very specific mode of composing the world through making science and politics public, and through the procedural enrolment of expertise and non-expertise (Amin 2011; Farías and Blok 2016b)

importance of material achievements in shaping modes of governing the good city. In recognising this, I am not reinventing the wheel. Elsewhere, Farías and Blok (2016) explicitly propose rethinking the urban against the political-economic standards that define the discipline of urban studies' core conceptual arsenal and offer a thought-provoking claim for taking ontological groundings of urban assemblages seriously in order to generate new problematizations of the urban: *"a cosmopolitical approach to the city focuses on the multiple forces and assemblages that constitute common urban worlds"* (ibid.:2). The concept of *urban cosmopolitics*, beyond its descriptive capacity functions to attest to the problem of multiplicity. To rethink city planning in cosmopolitical[95] ways demands that we break down contemporary modes of governance into a broad list of projects, statistics, interests and, as this thesis aimed to show as problematisations of urban public action. The production of a common world is thus an ongoing struggle for singularity and visibility; one in which contemporary forms of public action claim uniqueness by approaching urban projects as good.

To overcome this idea of a common world, also implies defeating the ideal of a common city. Then, to address the purpose of being cosmopolitical (in contrast to dialogic) is two things: **(1)** to question, problematize or probe the existing forms, politics and mechanisms of how to plan cities, and, **(2)** to slow down but also to reconfigure the de/re/politicization of several aspects of urban matter and public action. The first point is helpful for rethinking intellectual demarcations within the field of *planning theory* and how it comprehends its conceptual work and language to be of any support to professional realities. A similar argument is possible for the fields composing *urban studies*; rather than criticizing planning rationalities as techniques of empire, it is more telling to unfold how these techniques co-constitute various modes of ordering. The second point is paramount to planning practice, which in a way should not limit its scope to mark as perceptible certain values over rules while not being able to re-prioritise these questions into processes that in certain ways require or overrule the institutional attachment that situates its relevance.

As Stengers suggests, apart from opening novel questions, cosmopolitical thinking encourages us to 'experiment', 'speculate' and 'prototype' with universal discourses, technological aspirations and catchy categories from the situated practices as they are made applicable,

[95] *Cosmopolitics* is a concept coined by Isabel Stengers and further elaborated by Peter Sloterdijk and Bruno Latour. To paraphrase the latter, it is the progressive building and composition of the cosmos in which everyone lives in –Latour 2004b.

operable. Rather than a form of resistance, it is a way out from the inside of a profession to the outside of problematic situations. This would also entail a considerable 'composition work' (Latour 2011), or as Tironi and Criado have shown, for instance, to expand the meanings of existing registers and 'focus on grassroots appropriations of broader digital arrangements and politicizations to display other forms of or urban sensitivities' (Tironi and Criado 2015:99–101). Examples like the riverfront redevelopment in Lisbon, the housing redevelopment in Vienna or the urban construction project in Zurich should expose how rules and values are entangled in problematisations that co-determine processes, models and imaginings. These need to be studied for an understanding of the various interlinkages, vocabularies and categories that shape the formation of urban environments. Cosmopolitical thinking advocates active processes of reworking city planning as situated and does so 'from within' the mechanism itself, enabling to inquire the domains of the imperceptible, and how these situated practices, *oligopticons* or spheres, extend, materialise and coexist.

Beyond good and bad: what is problematic about the dialogic-urban age, and what is not

Equipped with the right words and means in the right world, city planning was the anchor of a modernist settlement trying to organize territorial and infrastructural space via grand strategies and imperatives. City planning dictated the propositions in a state apparatus that would fit right in to a Foucauldian analysis, whereby citizens were 'productions of subjectivity' to a series of *inter-alia* modes of ordering. Today, in a political age defined by grand virtues, city planning has lost its autonomy; it is embedded in various 'other' modes of problem-making. The recursive challenge today is not anymore, to separate nature and society. In a world dominated by uncertainty, expertise and efficacy, 'political events' enact a new collective voice. The modern dualism[96] of good and bad seems obsolete, replaced by the demands and challenges of 'true democracy'.

The point of this work has been to resist the temptation of finding an 'easy' way out by saying that planning 'escaped' objectivity through the fall of the modern state and rise of a global society. Acknowledging the conflicting definitions and contrasting juxtapositions of city planning, we were able to see how old imperatives subsist and new values emerge ignite new

[96] Distinguishing good science from bad science was the touchstone of modernity.

problematisations (and vice versa); good urban life refrains the 'great divide' (Stengers 2008:41). Living in a world far beyond the clear boundaries, categories and territories of the Moderns, makes it crucial to emphasise that the contemporary modes of governing aim to produce urban truths as a moral re-enchantment fit to accommodate and enact various ideals while through these new connections propose to idealise or dramatize certain outcomes. Good qualities to which planning subscribes are the result of something other than bureaucratic public action; inhabiting the question of rule and value, of the good and the bad through dialogue.

One way to finish this dissertation then could be to rethink a designation that speaks for much of the contemporary ways in ruling and thinking the place of cities in a world of shared expertise. Once, the 'urban age' was for long time connoted as daunting period due to pollution, poverty, sprawl. Now these problems are transformed into concerns, and put up for dialogue: sustainability, resilience, security etc; forces, infrastructures and possibilities that nourish and enter urban assemblages to the point of resituating planning practices.

The designation 'urban age' now prominently marks the contemporary ambition of public action to be dialogic and pursue the common good. A pursuit widely, though variously, adopted by planning practitioners, experts, stakeholders, policy-makers and mayors to engage working on ways to account and decide issues of urban change, while, for instance, urban scholars concerned with ways of theorising the urban condition have been widely questioning and criticising this trend either as a branding device, meta-narrative or statistical artefact (Brenner and Schmid 2014). Yet there is, strangely enough, a broadly shared commitment between urban professionals and researchers to acknowledge, categorise and study 'the urban' as a significant phenomenon. Remarkably, the hidden practices nourishing these effects have remained quite impenetrably explained. Often contested as means towards certain ends, planning is regarded to be the institutional guarantee to a certain mode of urban politics.

To inverse this approach, and, consider city planning through the prism of the 'urban age' is in no way an affirmative approach to validate a particular period in which cities have come to be more relevant, global or reckoned. Instead it is an attempt to consider how city planning comes to matter in contemporary arrangements of urban governance that perform, in various normative ways, the trope of the 'urban age' as a means of developing a particular rationale of non-modern urbanism (Karvonen 2018, 2020). It is particularly important to pinpoint this

distributed faith in technology as a successful dialogic recipe for urban governance. Lately, there has been a growing but ambiguous awareness that Information and Communication Technologies will not only help to transform urban life and experience but also repurpose urban practices and expertise. Doing research on planning was revealing about the entanglements of political aspirations and technological solutions, because these are matters helping planning to become public. The symmetry often found between both sides is especially striking. Technology brings hope and offers progress. Political affairs, with their increasing search for greater legitimacy, lack those virtues. With the urban substituting many voids (Jon 2021), planning's becoming public also implies a translation of its constitutive principles into multiple urban assemblages.

While local governments aspire to become even more public, good urbanism seems to be mostly found in contemporary discourses, scenarios and horizons of urban innovation. Although highly visible and versatile as I have tried to show, rankings, summits and consultancies are more than just 'latencies' (Latour 2005a) or 'emergences' (Thrift 2004b). It is significant how this glorification has affected the representations and operations of planning cities. While the triumphalist endorsement of technology is scarcely palpable, or anything near stable in planning practices, new formations of governance like to push the public action narrative along strategies, categories and forms of smart, sustainable or sentient *citying*. To the point of such normative perceptibility of progress and hope being manifested not only in political programs or agendas, but also in corporate advisory, digital platforms or built fabrics. Today's (good) urbanism is such an expression of technology 'going native', that is, an expression of high-end technical solutions being materialized or rendered autonomous as public action. While *Autonomous Technology* (Winner 1978) has nothing but become a unfulfilled prophecy, largely remaining a hopeful formulation in the branches of entrepreneurial tech-industry, its abstract ideals and principles have come to turn urban democracy and public engagement with planning into an 'issue-less' exercise; a formulation I borrow from Marres to describe the implications of democratized projects and the hope that policy-making offers in terms of inclusiveness and accountability (Marres, 2007: 763).

Outlook: situating planning, re-activating common sense

Having become a 'new orthodoxy', city planning hardly ever functions without a participatory approach being part of its entangled processes (Haughton et al. 2009:200). Dialogue and more

engaged public action as a proxy to universal consensus, is not, however, a solution. To plan for collective agreements will not suddenly or magically turn urban planning, development or governance processes into more committed exercises. Lezaun and Soneryd have prominently shown how public engagement is openly conceptualized as a 'transparency exercise'. More precisely, they speak of the 'eventfulness of public engagement' (Lezaun and Soneryd 2007:283). Essential to this understanding of eventfulness is not only the design of encounters or the conduct of debate, but how these practices are de- and re-mobilized as material outcomes. Taking public engagement as a governmental rationale has only led planning to be even less articulated and 'out of bonds'. After going through all the material in this dissertation, we can say that planning has reinvented itself to make communities real (Rose 1999). While the trajectory of becoming dialogic/public is highly versatile, ranging from promising to regulatory affairs, public concerns are often treated as fixed, static and clear. Worse, public concerns become integrated and identifiable issues in planning processes.

What if then planning derives its value from the issues for which it alone can ensure a settlement and this, without erasing much of the political stakes or democratic ideals, is what it self-proclaims to resolve? A kind of 'cosmopolitical correctness' that would require the reinvention of terms, conditions and settings so that various divides such as rule and value, politics and society, or governance and science can be thought of not only in reference to each other but through the complex imbroglio that they present. What does this entail for city planning? On all registers, from theoretical to methodological but also political, it would entail a repositioning of the profession away from an overhanging to an encapsulated position. To be ***a-***modern is not only to partially get rid of the modernist ideal, which thinks of environments as external and controllable (by planners, engineers, architects or scientists), but to be situated and become within, as Haraway (2003) would say. Instead of having a unilateral and universal view on things, city planning would need to rethink how the profession itself has been contributing to the problematisations and 'malaises' it now miraculously wants to embrace, and address, by repurposing public action through dialogue and by becoming more public.

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